

The Capuchin Annual 1969



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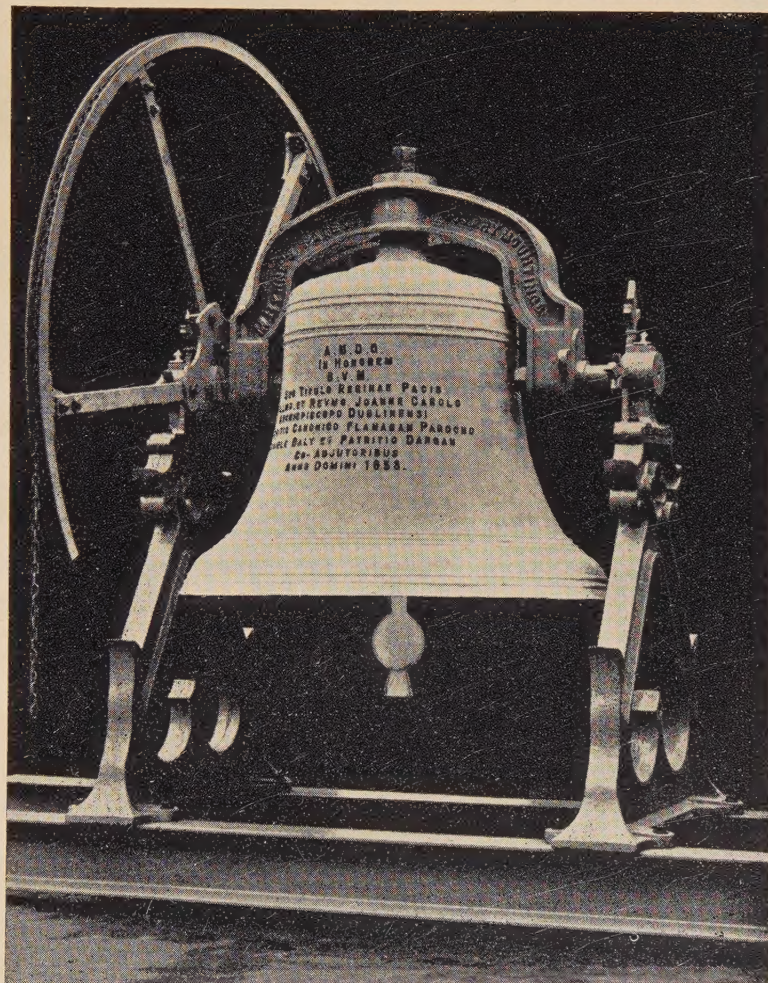
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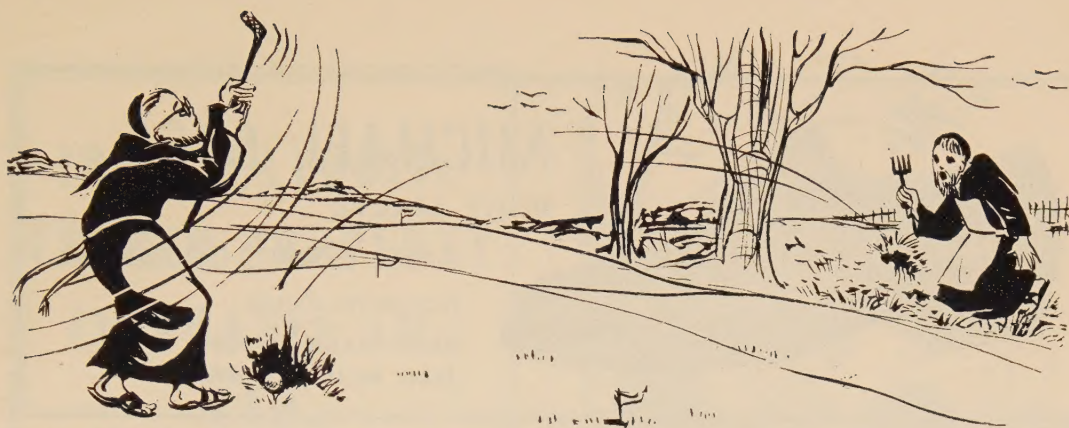
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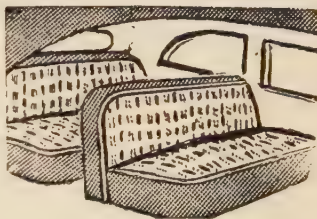
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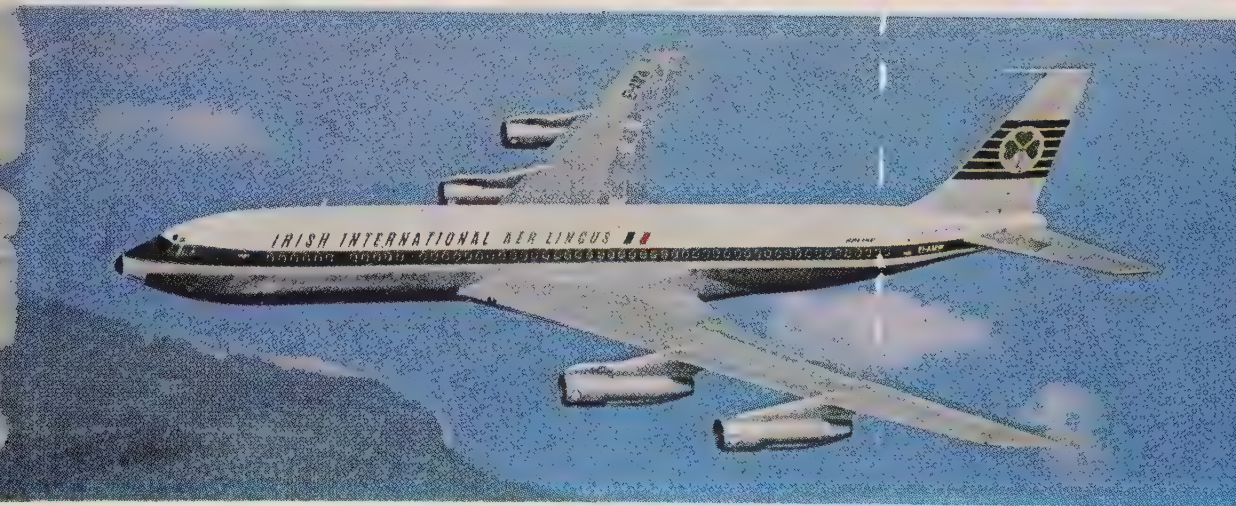
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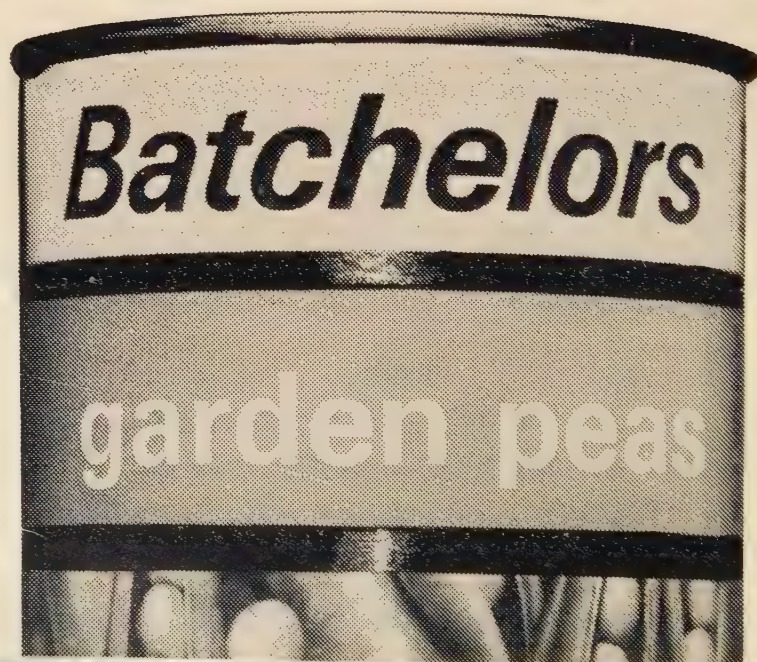
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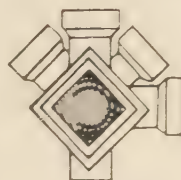
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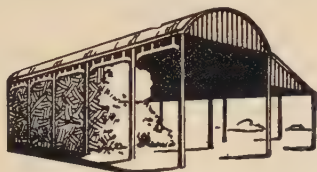
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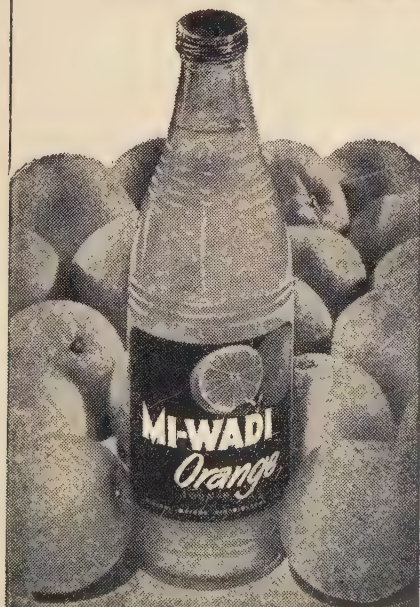
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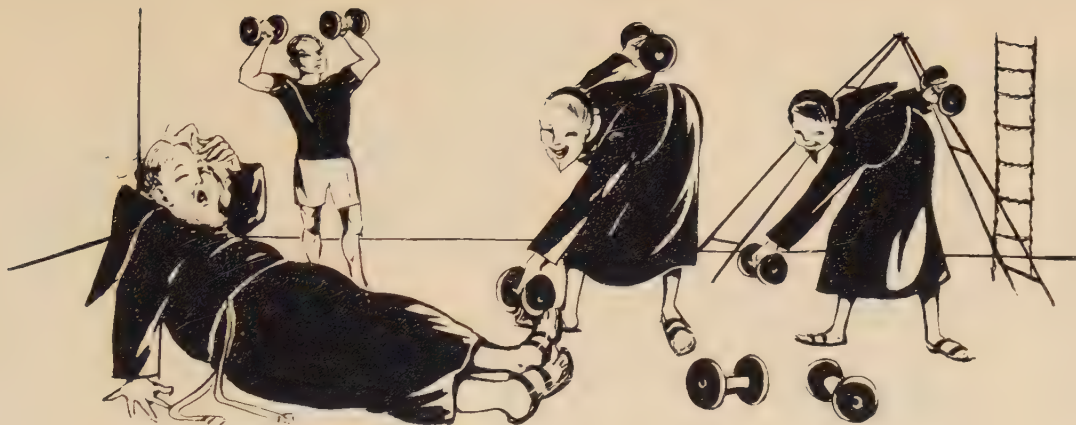
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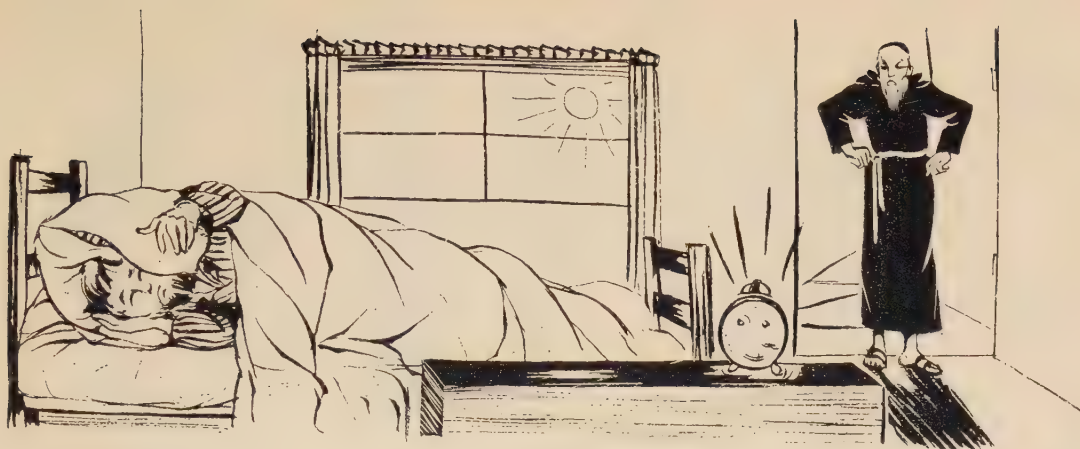
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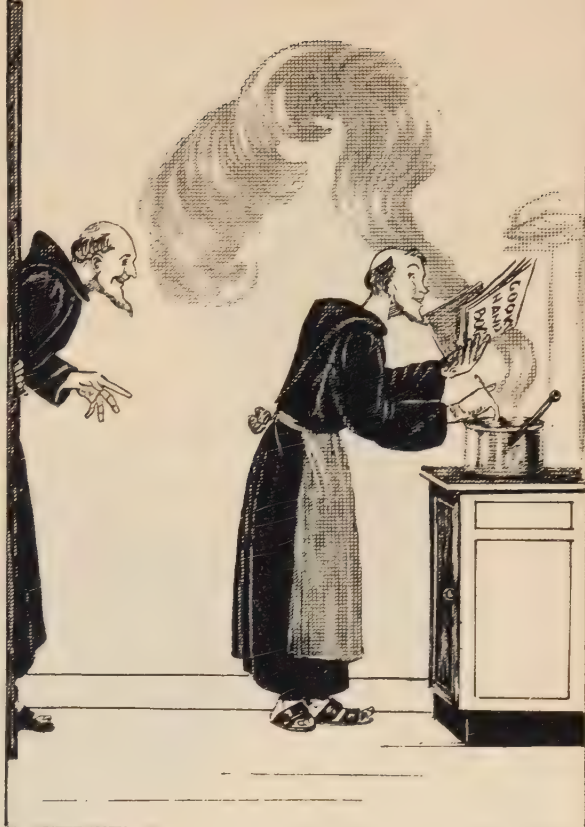


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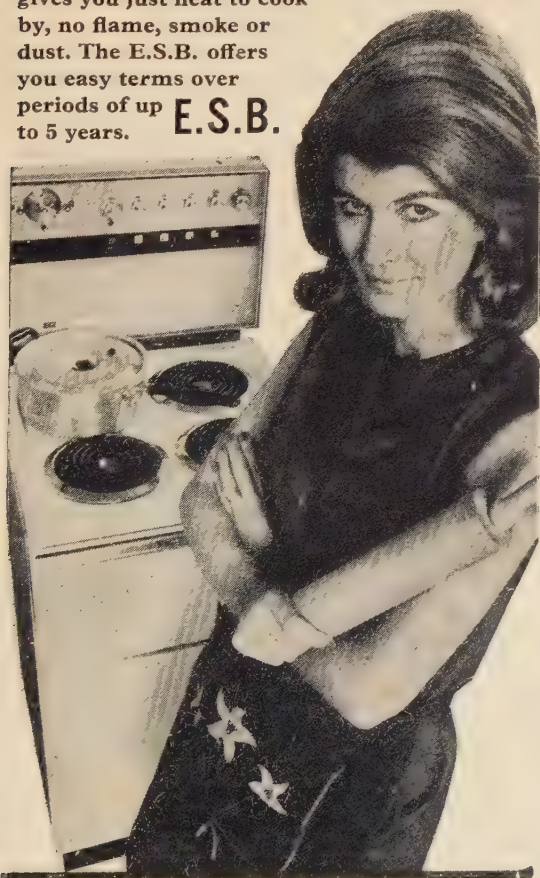
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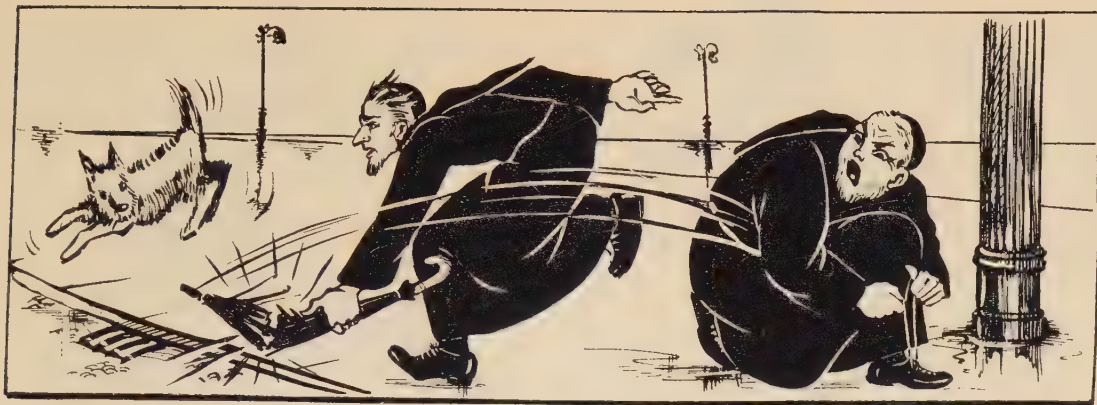


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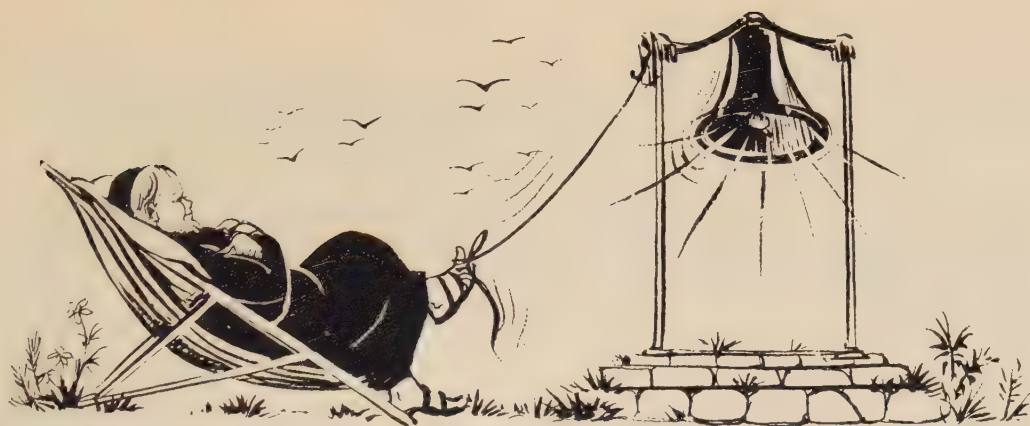
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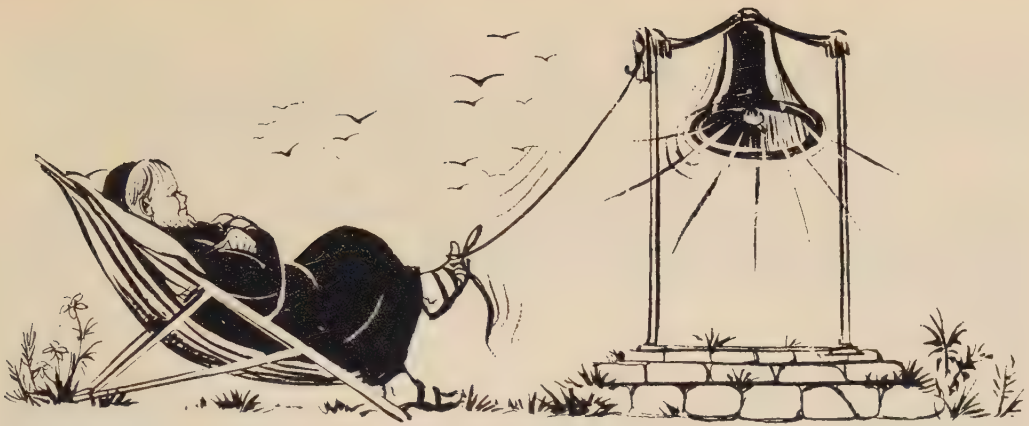
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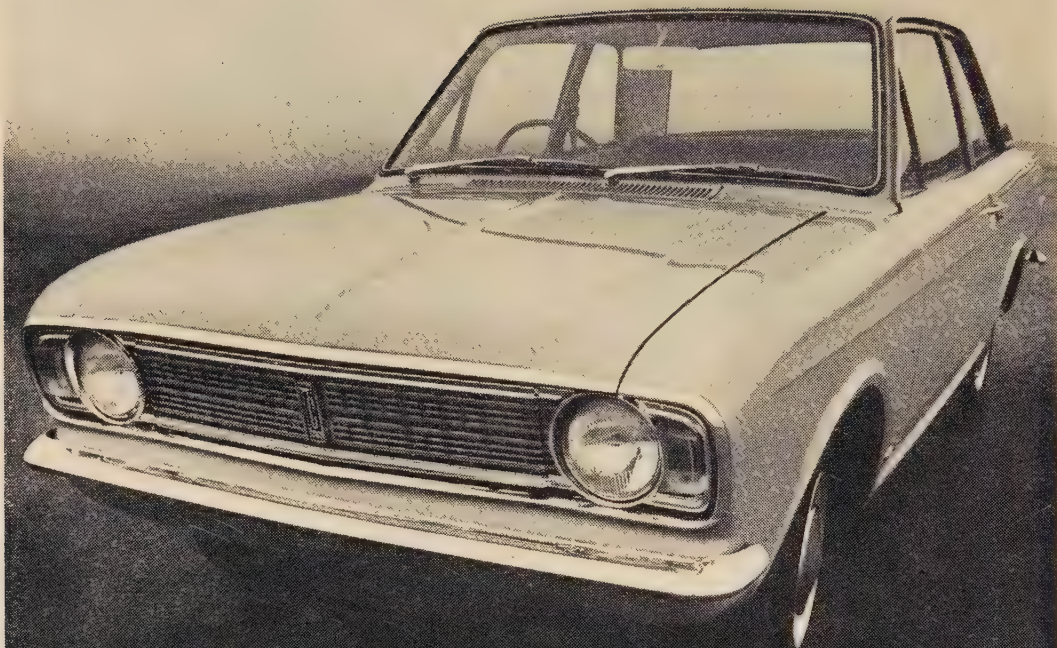
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THIRTY-SIXTH YEAR OF PUBLICATION

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Edited by

FATHER HENRY, O.F.M.Cap.

THIRTY SHILLINGS

DUBLIN

CHURCH STREET

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Cover Design by the late SEAN O'SULLIVAN, R.H.A.

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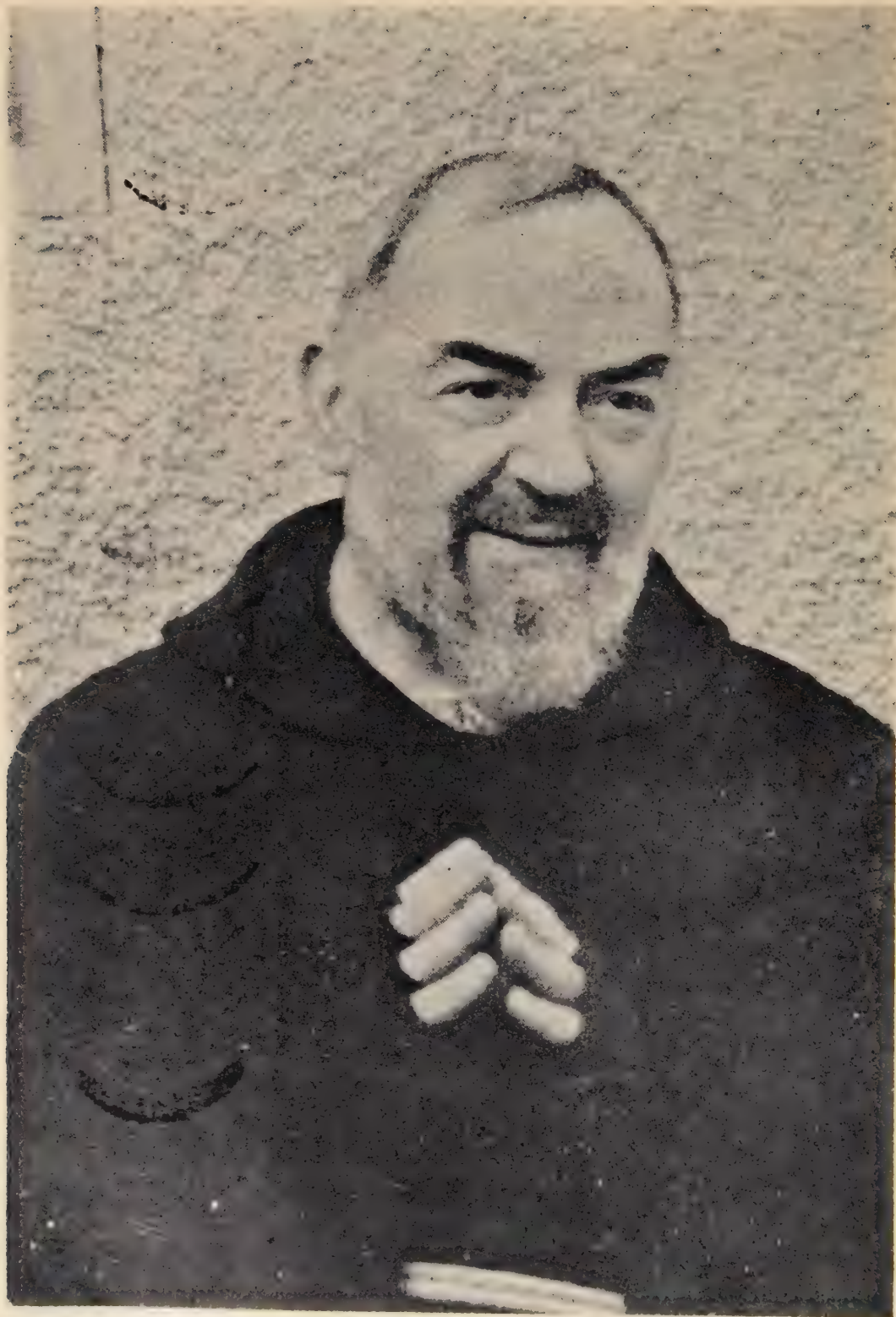
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SAN GIOVANNI ROTONDO, FOGGIA, ITALY, IN OCTOBER, 1968.

“A VALIANT WOMAN”

By

EAMONN DE BARRA

UNTIL the onset of her final illness a few short weeks before her death on 7 November, 1968, Senator Margaret Mary Pearse, then in her ninety-first year, took an eager interest in life and kept herself informed on public affairs. Daily she read the papers and had downright and penetrating comments to make on the reported events. Sometimes she was saddened by tragic happenings and sometimes she would be roused to angry protest at the tactics of those who, she thought, were denigrating the national ideals. She was vehement in her condemnation of people who sought to prevent the national language from holding its rightful place in the schools. “I might suffer fools,” she would say, “but I will not tolerate traitors.”

All her long life she was a great reader with a catholic taste in literature which did not exclude historical romances and in later years detective stories. In the last two years she began to read again *The Scarlet Pimpernel* series and recaptured the thrills she had experienced on first reading Baroness Orczy's famous tales of the French Revolution. Up to the end, and for very many years before, she was a regular subscriber to a French magazine and thus maintained her excellent command of the French language which she had studied in her youth in Belgium and which she had taught at St. Enda's.

Miss Pearse liked to listen to selected programmes on the radio but only occasionally wished to look at the television screen. Because her incapacitation in recent years prevented her from attending Mass, she looked forward to the televised Mass on Sunday mornings in which she participated reverently. On no account would anyone be allowed to interrupt her during that ceremony. A few other programmes attracted her also: on the day after the All-Ireland Hurling Final last September I called to see her at St. Enda's and she told me with delight how much she had enjoyed seeing the match on television. “I cheered Wexford,” she said, “and was delighted when they won after putting up so great a fight in the second half.”



MARGARET MARY PEARSE

1878 to 1968



A few hours before she suffered the stroke which proved terminal, Miss Pearse had been listening to Paddy Crosbie's programme, *Back to School*, on the radio. I called to her bedroom in St. Enda's just as the programme had ended and she said to me: "I will be willing to appear on that *Back to School* programme. Will you see Paddy Crosbie and ask him to call here with his tape recorder?" I promised to do so but, alas, she was never again to be in a position to record her reminiscences. It would have been a most interesting programme for she had a phenomenal memory and could recall vividly many details of her own school life as well as that of her two brothers. She once told me that she always got first place in every subject in her class at school and used to stay up all night studying before examinations.

Her acute memory enabled her to remember clearly every boy who had attended at St. Enda's and she had many stories to tell about them. They all retained affectionate memories of the mothering care she gave them as matron of the school. Among the subjects which she taught at St. Enda's was Christian Doctrine and she prepared all the younger boys for first Holy Communion and Confirmation. As well as being a devout Catholic, exemplary in her devotions, she was extraordinarily well versed in the doctrines and liturgy of her religion. She tended with loving and competent care the vestments and vessels in the beautiful little oratory at St. Enda's where Mass was celebrated for the boys on first Fridays and special feast-days. Like her brother Pádraic, she had an exceptional and abiding reverence for the Crucifix and the Sacred Heart; the Crucifix and pictures of the Sacred Heart were prominently exhibited throughout the school.

Margaret Mary Pearse was the eldest child of James Pearse and Margaret Brady, and was born in Dublin on 4 August, 1878. She was immensely proud of her father



Mr. and Mrs. James Pearse, father and mother of Margaret and her brothers Pat and Willie.

whom she always called "Papa" and she retained her deep love for him to the very end of her days. "Papa was a great man," she would say, "he was a very great man". She loved Dublin and its people, the true-born Dubliners, especially for their gift of humour which, indeed, she shared to a high degree. She took a hearty delight in the sketches of Jimmy O'Dea whose death she deeply mourned. "I am a Jimmy O'Dea fan," she would say. While she was able she attended the Jimmy O'Dea shows in the Olympia and Gaiety theatres and in later years she relished his radio and television appearances. Many a time she would say proudly: "I am a Dubliner" and she so loved her native city's streets and historic buildings that after the conferring on her of

the honorary D.Litt. Degree by the National University of Ireland in 1966 during the Golden Jubilee commemoration of the Easter Week Rising, she insisted on being driven on a tour of her beloved city before returning to her sick bed in Linden Convalescent Home. It was to be her farewell visit until the sad day when her remains were borne in a state funeral through the city's principal streets from Rathfarnham to Glasnevin. I think she enjoyed the city tour in 1966 more than the elaborate conferring ceremonial in Dublin Castle for, she afterwards recurrently referred to her tour with nostalgic affection.

Her abiding love was for St. Enda's. It held many heroic, sad, intimate memories for her. She took delight in having a responsive listener with whom she could share her memories of the great days at St. Enda's and her anecdotes of her brothers Pádraic and Liam, who were always to her the "Pat" and "Willie" of their care-free childhood. She followed the example of her mother in insisting that both the boys (as she called them) should be remembered together. As they were inseparable all through their lives and were united in their death before the firing squads in 1916, she held strongly that their names should forever be linked together. She was emphatic that Willie should be honoured not only for the gifted sculptor that he was but also for his able partnership in Pádraic's work for Ireland as a teacher and a revolutionary. In presenting the gift of the house and grounds at St. Enda's to the nation, Miss Pearse expressed the wish that "they should constitute a memorial to Patrick H. Pearse and William Pearse and to their

deeds and efforts for the freedom of Ireland and the preservation and promotion of the Irish language." During her long and active participation in politics (she was a member of *An Dail* before she became a Senator), she availed herself of every opportunity to advocate the cause of the Irish language and urged those with even a limited vocabulary to use whatever they had each day, especially in the home with the children.

Of her innumerable acts of charity no one can speak fully for, no one knows the extent of her benefactions down the years. Even when she was hard pressed financially herself I have known her to dispense donations to what she regarded as deserving causes. I greatly fear that on very many occasions her unquestioning generosity was imposed upon. She championed several causes: the succour of the needy, the propagation of temperance, the abolition of blood sports (she loved all animals) and many more; to all she gave unstinting support.

Above and beyond all else was her devotion to her religion and, after that, her devotion to her country. To her manifold activities she brought a penetrating, vigorous intellect and a clear-cut, unswerving sincerity, and yet she had a calm, gentle tolerance (but no compromise on essentials) of those who held contrary views to hers.

"Who shall find a valiant woman?" asks the Book of Proverbs. In Margaret Mary Pearse there certainly was found a valiant woman who throughout her long and active life displayed the noblest qualities of fortitude and zeal in her service of God, of her country and of her fellow-man. Solus na bhFlaitheas da hanam uasal!



Prisoners' Experiences

By

FINTAN BRENNAN

IT may seem strange that after a lapse of forty-six years I have decided to put on record my recollections of Parkhurst prison and the fight put up there by a small group of I.R.A. men for prisoner-of-war treatment although entirely denied communication with the outside world, and surrounded by officials and inmates who could be regarded as one hundred per cent. hostile. That that fight lasted with varying degrees of intensity from, as far as I can recollect, August 1920 to the date of release, January 14, 1922, is indicative of the spirit of the time.

Now aged over eighty-two years and with nothing to rely on save that tricky jade, memory, I face the task knowing full well how very difficult it is going to be to do justice to such a subject. However, I do so now because I believe the facts have never been published, and as a tribute to the men who took part, and whose heroism deserves to be recorded. In addition I would like my own family to have such a record of those stirring times.

If any name is omitted or any particular incident not accurately recorded I must ask my former comrades to take into account the handicap under which I now write. Further, I should like the reader to know

that I played a very minor part in the planning of this campaign which was the responsibility of the I.R.A. officers then in prison, and that it was the example of men like Tadhg Manly, J. J. Walsh and Maurice Crowe which kept us together during the long depressing period of close confinement for twenty-three out of twenty-four hours a day—a torture to which only the Fenians were subjected. If I mention matters in which I was personally concerned I do so because they are of general interest.

First of all, it is right that I should say that I found the prison governor a very humane and honourable man who held the scales evenly between all parties and never punished simply because he had the power to do so. On the other side of the ledger I found that the deputy governor had a fanatical hatred of the I.R.A. prisoners and always used his power to twist the regulations to our disadvantage. With four exceptions, the warders were men without bias to whom you were a unit to be accounted for and nothing more.

I was sentenced in October, 1920, to five years penal servitude for having a "small arsenal" on my premises. I arrived at Parkhurst on a cold night some time in

the following November, accompanied by the late Captain Hugh McNally. The following morning I was brought to a long hall for my official haircut and while there a negro passed along. He was dressed in a quartered suit, the top right side of the tunic was black, the bottom yellow, while on the left side the colours were reversed. The canvas slacks which he wore were in similar colours. He wore chains which hung from his hips to his ankles, each link being about the size of a large sausage, and as he walked they made a loud though not a discordant sound. These chains had been fastened to his body with clips, and in them he would sleep and bathe for the next six months. As he passed, the "trusty" who was cutting my hair whispered, "he tried to escape." I often thought that the show had been put on for our edification.

On the following Sunday I met the other I.R.A. men including Maurice Crowe, the leader. I did not meet Tadhg Manly as he had been segregated and was in a different part of the prison, because as a leader he had started the campaign of refusal to obey any prison regulation. But while I was going from one part of the prison to another he was pointed out to me, being exercised all on his own; the man in charge was a member of the Orange Order with whom I later became friendly and who told me he had a great admiration for Manly. At that time Manly had become a legendary figure because of the way in which he pursued his course of resistance to prison discipline, and the calm manner in which he absorbed the punishment inflicted on him.

After a long period of trial and error the governor found it was useless punishing the I.R.A. men for refusing to work, so he made a bargain with them. They would not be punished for not working but they would lose all privileges, including the usual letter and visit every two months, or alternatively two letters with no visit.



Typical prison cell.

When I was told of these arrangements, I was very depressed as I had not heard from my wife, and did not know how things stood with regard to our children and home. I could not rest or sleep, and was always in a sullen, gloomy mood. Then one day when I was at my worst a ray of sunlight lighted up my cell, I had a visit from the assistant chaplain, the Reverend Father J. Aherne—now Canon Aherne, P.P., Ovens parish, Cork. He saw I was in pretty bad shape and remained with me for a long time, until he had talked me out of my despondent mood. Needless to say I was worried, but was never again subject to fits of depression.

All the Parkhurst Irish prisoners recall with gratitude Father Aherne's warm sympathy and understanding and above all his commonsense approach to our problems.

Each prisoner was attached to a party such as bakery, laundry, farm, building

party, etc. We went with the party to which we were assigned but we did no work, nor did we do our share of orderly duty. The week before Christmas the governor went on holidays and the deputy-governor took over, and then the most rigid regime began. His first step was to refuse us the Christmas letter. To understand how malignant this action was, I have to explain that the Christmas letter was not governed by prison regulations, but was a special grant recommended by King George V to all prisoners at Christmas so that they could write to their families. It was known as "the King's Grant." All prisoners were entitled to this privilege except those undergoing punishment, or those who were under report for a breach of the regulations. As we were not at fault in either of these conditions we were fully entitled to the letter. But another storm was brewing which did not burst until Christmas Eve. At 7 a.m., Hugh McNally and, I think, Sean Noonan, were ordered to do their share of orderly duty which they refused, as they held they were exempt under the arrangement made with the governor. They were taken to the punishment cells and at 11 a.m. and brought before the deputy-governor, who sentenced them to three days on bread and water. Imagine their feelings at being confined in the punishment cell on Christmas Eve, Christmas Day and Saint Stephen's Day. Their Christmas fare was a pound of dry bread with a pint of water, but worse even than this was being deprived of the privilege of attending Mass and receiving Holy Communion as had been arranged. This development placed Maurice Crowe in a very awkward position as it had been arranged with the chaplain that all I.R.A. men would go to Confession and receive Holy Communion on Christmas Day, and if the deputy-governor pursued his plan he could easily have all of us in punishment cells for Christmas. I must say I always admired Maurice for

his courage in directing us to do orderly duty if called on.

Meantime, I discussed the question of the Christmas letter with any of the group I could meet, but all were in a fighting mood, and would not ask the deputy-governor for anything. I had it on good authority that the deputy-governor was acting contrary to regulations, and as no order had been issued not to do so, I decided to make a test case of it. If I were refused, the group would not be compromised and if it were granted it must apply to all the others. So, on Saint Stephen's Day at 11.30 a.m. I appeared before the deputy-governor to request that my Christmas letter be issued. His reply was, "You are not entitled to the Christmas letter since you continue to break the regulations by refusing to work." I replied, "the conditions which would justify your refusal do not apply to me since I am not undergoing punishment nor under report for a breach of the prison discipline." He became very angry and replied, "I am not here to discuss the prison regulations with you. My decision is final. Your application is refused." If the poor man could have foreseen the humiliation that that decision would eventually bring on him he would there and then have reversed it.

Nothing very serious happened until the end of January, when we were reinforced by a group of tough fighting men from Cork and Tipperary, headed by such notable characters as J. J. Walsh and Paddy O'Keeffe, who was later to devote his life to the building up of the Gaelic Athletic Association.

J. J. was an experienced prison fighter having been through various prisons after 1916. With M. Crowe, T. Crawford and J. Callanan he planned a strike on the following lines: (1) Demand for prisoner-of-war treatment and, if refused, to refuse to wear prison clothes; (2) refuse to obey any order from a prison warder; (3)

if ordered to go anywhere by a prison official to refuse to walk and have to be carried or dragged as they chose; (4) to keep up a perpetual din so as to annoy the other prisoners and thus impair discipline. (As silence while in cells is an unwritten law this latter proved very effective as quite a high percentage of prisoners applied for transfers to other prisons); (5) refuse to allow them to cut your hair.

Having made a close study of the prison regulations, I had the pleasure of correcting one bigot who took away my Rosary and refused to return it until I asked him to quote the regulation under which a Catholic could be deprived of his Rosary.

Here I may state that the regulations were completely set aside so far as the I.R.A. men were concerned. The rule was: *All prisoners doing their first term must be located apart from the habitual prisoners.* They were exercised and worked separately, and even in the chapel they were kept separate. When it came to locating the I.R.A. men, they were placed among the habituais—the ratio being eight to two. This meant eight cells occupied by habitual criminals between every two I.R.A. men. The purpose was so that we could not plan anything without the lags hearing and reporting to the officials. How utterly stupid they were! The strike was planned down to the last detail under their very noses, while they left us a weapon with which they could expose their boasted impartiality. Every man got his instructions. He was at full liberty to use all and every means to obstruct and upset prison routine.

So, on a February morning about seven hundred men in parties of ten to twenty were all lined up in the prison square awaiting the order to march to work. J. J. Walsh stepped out from his party and walked calmly to a vacant spot, and in a voice that must surely have been heard all over the prison he shouted, "Soldiers of the Irish Republic, follow me!" In a

minute we were all around him yelling and cheering like schoolboys.

The prison officials were flabbergasted as they had not got even the slightest hint that anything was afoot. We were at once surrounded by a group of warders who did nothing until all the other prisoners had left the square. Then the armed sentries were ordered to be ready to fire if called on. The warders then ordered us to go to our cells, but we did not stir, and when they tried to force us we lay down and they had to drag or carry us. Across the prison square and along the cement floored halls we were dragged. Two hefty warders had each one by the ankles, pulling him along on the broad of his back, and it was up to each of us to see that his head did not come in contact with any obstacle during the passage. Going upstairs the process was reversed. They hauled us up head first and it was up to each one to see that his heels were not too much damaged. Strange as it may seem only one of the warders lost his temper, and brutally assaulted one of the men by kicking him in the abdomen, a breach of discipline for which he was very severely punished.

The most dangerous part of the strike programme was our refusal to wear prison clothes. In our run-down state of health we could easily have got pneumonia. From about 7.30 to 9.30 a.m. we were in our cells with nothing on but cotton shirts. It can easily be imagined what the cold was like in a badly heated cell on a February morning.

When the chief warden came around on inspection about 9.30 and found you undressed he ordered that you be forcibly dressed. The suit you got was made of coarse canvas. There was an apron-like flap which had a hole and was pulled over your head and fastened at the back. There was a steel belt attached which had handcuffs on either side just about where it passed over the hips. You were then handcuffed in this way until 6.30 p.m.; these

handcuffs would not be unlocked—even to relieve nature. This barbarous regulation gave rise to conditions which at times, to put it mildly, were most unpleasant. (As the order to resume wearing prison clothing was soon issued they only lasted a few days at most). The only seat in the cell was the bole of a tree set in concrete. It stood about eighteen inches in height and was about twelve inches in diameter and on this the warder set down your pint of water and pound of dry bread. As the movement of our hands was so restricted we had to go on our knees in order to reach the food. If any one doubts this, I suggest, having his hands tied to the belt of his coat, and see if he can reach an object eighteen inches from the ground. Let him also try to pick an object off the floor while kneeling. About four days afterwards, J. J. and Tadhg were transferred to some other prison, but before leaving, J. J. gave the order to resume wearing the prison clothes which, of course, left us in a better position to carry out the rest of our strike programme. However, if we lost the guidance of these two fine leaders, we had the consolation of having our small force augmented by the arrival of eight sturdy men from Cork city. They were known as "The Lord Mayor's Bodyguard." They had been chosen to act as bodyguard to accompany the remains of Lord Mayor Terence McSwiney from Brixton Prison, and had been arrested on the boat from Holyhead. For the offence of wearing full officers uniform complete with Sam Brown belt they were sentenced to three years penal servitude. Their names were Pat Canton, Tom Turner, Jerry Canty, Bill Connolly, Ed. Fitzgerald, J. Callaghan, Batt Dunlea and Gerry Mullins. On arrival they joined in the "fun" and took what was going—the rough with the smooth, which included having their nice curly locks forcibly cut.

The most painful of all the operations was the forcible haircut. I will not go into

details except to say that about five hefty warders knocked you down and held you while the sixth operated the clippers. When he got your head in position he went into top gear and for a while you would be shorn to the skin. It might happen that at that point you would give your head a jerk as a sort of protest and he would pluck you for the rest of the course. When he was finished whatever chance you had in a competition confined to scarecrows you certainly would not do too well in a hair-style show.

After testing us for nine days on bread and water plus solitary confinement we were brought back to normal rations and allowed an hour's exercise every day but were still kept in the punishment cells which meant that we had to strip every evening at 6.30 and hand out our clothes and we would then be handed in our bed clothes which consisted of a sheet, a blanket and a rug. With these wrapped round us and lying on the floor and speaking under the door we started our nightly entertainment. First we recited the Rosary which seemed to annoy some of the habitués beyond measure. One man told me he regarded it as something weird. Having finished the Rosary we started our concert. Tom Crawford and Jerry Callanan were fine singers but everyone contributed something—recitations, stories, tall yarns about the particular official you would be revenged on when you got your freedom. But the two people most annoyed were warders Ellicott and Brown. They tried to drive us from the doors by spraying water at the bottom but it wasn't very effective as the cell floors were higher than the hall outside so very little water came in. Brown was a huge big man with a head like a gorilla while Ellicott was small and dapper with the biggest moustache I ever saw. Both were ex-army men and very officious. My contribution to one of our concerts was a rhyme about the two. I will give you a sample verse:

*At night when all should be asleep,
The boys have house-come-down,
With quip and joke such fun we poke,
At Ellicott and Brown,
And little Scott that funny lad,
Said how I'd cut a dash,
If only I had Brown's big head,
And Ellicott's moustache.*

The warders, however, had their revenge as at midnight I was taken from my cell where I was enjoying myself with the lads and brought to the silent cells—a block set aside for intractable or mentally deranged prisoners. I then discovered that Sean Kennedy, The Commons, Thurles, was already there and we soon devised a means of communication which was just as effective as if the governor had provided a telephone.

Some time before Easter the visiting Justices interviewed each man in his cell. The spokesman's opening remark to me was "can't you realise that you can't beat the governor and that it is his duty to enforce the regulations." To which I replied "then the Governor should start setting us the good example by observing regulations himself." When he asked to explain I pointed out that we were all men doing our first term of imprisonment and as such were entitled to be located among that class. Instead we were located among the habitual criminals at the ratio of eight to two. I further pointed out that one of our men, a mere youth of seventeen years, was placed in a cell beside a man who was doing his third term of penal servitude for sexual offences with boys. I pointed out the charges proven against my own nearest cell neighbours prior to the strike. On one side was a man who was doing his term for brutally assaulting a prostitute, on whose earnings he lived, while on the other side was a man who had been convicted of incest. Further, I said the generous recommendation of His Majesty King George had been flouted in order to punish

us by refusing the Christmas letter, known as the King's Grant. Here the governor intervened to say that that was not correct as he had never issued such instructions. I then stated that I had appeared before the deputy-governor at 11.30 a.m. on Saint Stephen's Day to make application for the letter, but my request was refused. "And now," I said, "I make application to you, gentlemen, that the prison records for Saint Stephen's Day be brought here for your inspection." The deputy-governor was a civil servant who had come up from the ranks, the governor an aristocrat who had held high rank in one of the crack regiments. They never got on. The governor regarded his deputy as a snooper and this was a glorious chance to get some of his own back, so he ordered the records be brought and the deputy present. The latter tried to brazen his way out on the grounds that as matters stood we were virtually under report all the time, and thus not entitled to the Christmas letter. The governor's reply was: "the arrangement I made has not been kept, but to show that His Gracious Majesty's recommendation will be carried out in this prison, I will this day order that each *Sinn Féin* prisoner will be issued his Christmas letter." And so after a period of almost twelve months for some, and six months for the majority, we all could let our families know that we were still alive.

When the fight in Ireland was at its height we were honoured by a most encouraging visit from the Most Reverend Doctor Cotter, Bishop of Portsmouth, accompanied by our good friend, Father Aherne. This visit made us feel very proud.

But the visit of the Justices had other repercussions. We were soon located in a wing of the prison to ourselves. We were even allowed to appoint our own barber—Jerry Callanan, a very wise selection. Father Dominic, O.F.M.Cap., was located in the hospital, where he had access to the daily papers and other sources of informa-

tion. All this he set out in a bulletin which had the title, *The Parkhurst Gael*, which was passed on to Jerry; as we had our haircut we also received a fair account of what was happening at home. We still refused to go out with the parties, and were kept in our cells all day except for two hours exercise.

When the truce was signed at home the governor assembled us all, including Father Dominic, and without reservation asked, "Can we not have a truce here and you men go back to work"? Father Dominic and Maurice Crowe, speaking for the party, refused even to consider the matter.

This in my opinion was the only blunder our leaders made. I know how easy it is to be wise after the event, but it must have been pretty obvious that when prisoner-of-war treatment for prisoners had not been provided for in the Truce conditions, we could not secure it on our own, cut off as we were from the outside world. It may surprise, but it is nevertheless a fact, that when we arrived in Dublin after release in January, 1922, the daily papers had not even an inkling of what had been going on in Parkhurst for just two years. I am convinced that if we had bargained we could easily have secured the concession of being formed into two parties under our own officers with a prison warder to supervise, so anxious was the governor for peace. But we missed the tide and so from February to April, 1921, we spent twenty-three out of twenty-four hours a day in solitary confinement, very often on bread and water diet for the simplest breach of the *Regulations* and from April, 1921 to January, 1922, we spent twenty-two out of twenty-four hours in our cells, but in this latter period, conditions had greatly improved and the *Regulations* were not so strictly enforced. To understand the mental torture it is to be shut up in a small space without anything to occupy the mind or the hands you would have to go through the experience, and

that is something I don't ever wish even my worst enemy.

I am firmly convinced that many of the highly strung lads, who went through the Parkhurst ordeal, never fully recovered.

One last thing I would like to record and that is that on the morning we were released I cut in the plaster of my cell wall the following extract from a speech by Thomas F. Meagher, Young Ireland Leader:

THE CAUSE OF IRISH FREEDOM

A cause like ours cannot fail, the best faculties of our race have been expended in its service, the best blood of our people has been shed in its defence, men have served this cause who have made the prison cell a shrine of fame, and the gallows a place of honour.

FINTAN BRENNAN,
14th January, 1922.

Some have gone to their last reward—Father Dominic, O.F.M.Cap., J. J. Walsh, Paddy O'Keeffe, Johnny O'Riordan, Hugh McNally, Batt Dunlea, Gerry Mullins, Sgt. J. McCarthy, L. Barry and Michael Gammell. There may be others of whom I have not heard, and while those of us who have been spared will never forget their sincerity of purpose and their willingness to help others over the rough spots, the best place to remember them now is in our prayers that God in his mercy will grant them *Rest in Peace*.

THE ROLL OF HONOUR

CORK CITY

The Reverend Father Dominic, O.F.M.Cap., J. J. Walsh, Paddy O'Keeffe, Tadhg Manly, Pat Canton, Jerry Canty, Tom Turner, Bill Connolly, Allan Busby, Batt Dunlea, Gerry Mullins, J. Callaghan, Ed. Fitzgerald, Michael Donoghue, Ryfield, White Church.

COBH

Sgt. J. McCarthy, Bob Leahy.

WEST CORK

Paddy Dineen, Johnny Dineen (his brother).

CO. TIPPERARY

Maurice Crowe, Sean Kennedy, J. Scott,
P. McCormack, L. Stokes.

CO. LIMERICK

Tom Crawford, Jerry Callanan, Sean
Noonan, Michael Gammell, Johnny

O'Riordan, L. Barry.

CO. KILKENNY

Willie Brennan, Martin Gregg.

CO. KERRY

T. Spillane, Dan McKenna.

DUNGARVAN

Paddy Fraher.

CO. WEXFORD

Paul Forrestal.

CO. KILDARE

Captain Hugh McNally, Fintan Brennan.



*Father Albert O.F.M.Cap., with the children of
Thomas MacDonagh.*

Poverty—the poor, the plight of the poor—agitates the mind and heart of many people to-day. Young people in several places have taken a turn against a society interested in the accumulation of wealth—especially they rail against the concentration of wealth in the hands of the few—while so many people are destitute. Some young people have revolted against the society that countenances this cult of money and property and have left their comfortable, well-provided houses and families and have come together to protest in what has been called ostentatious slovenliness. There are others who voluntarily give thought and time and much heart to helping their less fortunate brethren—those who are ill, those who are old, those who are materially poor. Behind this there is much good; there is concern; there is devotion; but there is not, necessarily, poverty on the part of the people who become involved. We may say then that poverty has become a matter of wide concern to-day. Poverty became a live issue in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries when Saint Francis of Assisi, son of a wealthy merchant, left his father's home and personally embraced a life of poverty. We feel it is of interest now to place in its special perspective and to delineate as accurately as possible what has become known as Franciscan Poverty.—Editor.

FRANCISCAN POVERTY

By

BRENDAN O'MAHONY, O.F.M.Cap.

THE Church, through the Second Vatican Council, has invited all religious to a major work of renewal and adaptation. Religious Orders and congregations everywhere are responding to that call. They are studying the sources and inspiration of their life and adapting it to the present-day needs of the Church. The same Council in its Decree on the Renewal of the Religious Life (*Perfectae Caritatis*, n.2) indicated two guidelines to be followed in this work: “a constant return both to the sources of all Christian life and to the original spirit of the Religious Institute; and an adaptation of the Institute to the changed conditions of our times”. It is, therefore, in the spirit of Vatican II that we undertake this revision of the foundation of our Franciscan life, namely, *poverty*; returning first to the Source of all Christian living, and then to the spirit of the Founder, before finally investigating the possibilities of adapting that ideal of poverty to twentieth-century conditions.

The significance of poverty in the mind of Saint Francis may be gathered from these words of the saint, reported by Saint Bonaventure in his *Legenda Maior*, IX: poverty, he said, "was the foundation on which the whole edifice of his Order rested; and the stability or ruin of the Order, therefore, depended on the stability or ruin of this foundation". There can be no doubt but that in the mind of the Founder poverty was to be the cornerstone of the Franciscan way of life. A poor life, lived in imitation of the poverty of Christ and his Apostles, was the peculiar charism Francis brought to the life of the Church in his time. Poverty was not looked upon by Francis as an ascetical discipline, but paradoxically as a satisfying possession. He rejoiced in poverty as a delightful *presence* while so many regarded it as a doleful *absence*. His first biographer, Thomas of Celano, writes that Francis would "tell his sons that she (Lady Poverty) was the way of perfection, the pledge and earnest of eternal riches. No one was so greedy of gold as he of poverty; no one more careful in guarding a treasure than he in guarding this pearl of the Gospel" (II *Celano*, ii, 25).

What Saint Francis wrote and said were not merely his words but the words of the Spirit in him, and the word of God to us his followers. This is evident from his efforts at writing the *Primitive Rule* which is little more than a series of Gospel texts strung together. And his *Rule* of 1221 begins: "This is the life of the Gospel of Jesus Christ . . ." The young Francis was utterly convinced of this, that he was leading the Gospel life purely and simply. His final Rule was merely the adaptation to the social and cultural *milieu* of his time of a Gospel ideal that is timeless in its relevance. This is why he survives; and it is to this extent that he succeeds in transcending history. Through him the Spirit speaks to us.

HISTORICITY

On the other hand it must be insisted

that Francis was very much a man of his time. He was no charismatic dropped from the heavens into a completely foreign situation. To understand him we must understand his situation. We must insert him into the living history of his time. Francis was a "man for all seasons because he was first of all a man for his season".¹ It is significant, for example, that there were other movements, reform-groups, lay sects principally, which were unorganised or very loosely organised, at the time of Saint Francis. There were the *Humiliati* and the Poor Catholics on the orthodox side; there were the Albigensians and the Waldensians on the unorthodox. Church reform was very much in the air; and all the reform groups emphasised *poverty*, the preaching of penance, community living and personal austerity. The Church was insistent that Francis organize his followers and submit his way of life for approval. Pope Innocent III insisted that they become clerics of the Church and gave the tonsure to the first twelve when they journeyed to Rome to get approval for their way of life.

Looking at the past is not popular today. But we need to do this in order to establish our identity, to have a sense of who we are, to have a sense of our history. For, just as the identity of the *individual* is determined by his personal history, so too the identity of an *Order* is determined by its history. We are not asked to look back nostalgically to the thirteenth century as to a golden age. Neither are we called to a physical imitation of Francis in the style of John the Simple, one of the early companions. We are called upon not to repeat history but to make our own in the twentieth century. To do this authentically, however, we must know the mind and spirit of our Founder.

Since Saint Francis claimed that what he proposed was a way of life according to the holy Gospel, it is logical that we should first take a brief look at the Scriptural notion of poverty, which is normative for all religious life.

BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF POVERTY

The central theme of Christ's message was the actual arrival in his person of the Reign of God and the need of all men to do penance. (*Mk.* 1:15). In the presence of this saving reality man is summoned to a decision, to repentance (*metanoia*), a prompt, radical and lasting change of heart. This is positively expressed by faith. But Christ also called men to follow him, to be his disciples. The decision to accept this invitation involved searching demands²; for the Kingdom is such that a man should sell all he has to possess it (*Matt.*, 13:45). It is here that we must situate the teaching of Christ on voluntary poverty for the sake of the kingdom.

This is not to suggest that Christ preached a form of two-tier morality, a morality of perfection for the elect, and some lesser ideal for the masses.³ All Christians are called to perfection, and all are called to practise evangelical poverty. Poverty, in fact, is an intrinsic dimension of man's response to the *kerygma* (the Apostolic preaching), it is an intrinsic dimension of the Christian life as such. Even more, it is the prerequisite for hearing the summons. *Poverty is man's openness to the revelation of God in Christ.* Such is the significance of poverty in the Christian life in general.

In order to communicate his message, Christ was obliged to express himself in the language of his Jewish listeners. His teaching can best be understood in the light of what poverty meant for his audience.

OLD TESTAMENT⁴

The Old Testament has about six basic words for the poor which in translation may be rendered as, "a mendicant," "one who is weak," "dependant", "bowed-down", poor in the social sense, and poor in a more religious meaning of the term. Poverty is firstly a social condition of the people of Israel. This social condition was

differently interpreted at various stages in the history of Israel: first as a *punishment* for evil or temporal retribution (rejected by *Job*, 15:14); as a *scandal* when due to the injustice of man or simple misfortune; and finally as an *ideal* with Sophoniah (writing about 640 B.C.).

The dominant note in the Old Testament concept of poverty is expressed in the Hebrew word, "*andwim*," which means literally the "degraded", "afflicted" man. It does not refer, however, simply to an economic or social situation, but also to an interior disposition or spiritual attitude.⁵ It is a combination of fear and confidence in relation to God. The prophets were the defenders of the poor and the down-trodden and one of the tasks of the Messiah would be to defend the rights of the wretched and the poor.⁶ The distress of the poor gives them a special title to God's love.

With Bensira (Book of *Ecclesiasticus*, about 190-180 B.C.) there is a further development: whereas in Sophoniah the conception of poverty had a basis in the actual condition of the people, with *Ecclesiasticus* it becomes completely interiorized. It now designates only an interior attitude, characteristic of the biblical man's response to God (a combination of fear and confidence).

There is a final stage of development as we approach the time of Christ; the concept of a faithful remnant (already evident in the Psalms) becomes more important. There is also the increasing awareness of an after-life (about the end of the second century B.C.) and we find the Essenes living a life of voluntary poverty, holding property in common, as a sign of the eschatological community, the faithful remnant of the People of God.

For Israel, then, in the time of Christ, the people of God was the faithful remnant, poor both economically and spiritually, humble and trusting in God, awaiting a Saviour who was thought of as a suffering

Servant. This gives us the actual setting for the New Testament teaching on poverty.

NEW TESTAMENT

The "poor in spirit" of the beatitudes (*Matt.*, 5:3) are heirs to the "*anawim*". By beginning his opening discourse, the Sermon on the Mount, with the beatitude concerning the poor, Christ wanted the poor to be recognised as the privileged heirs to the kingdom he was proclaiming.⁷ Matthew, in his account, stresses poverty as a spiritual attitude: "Blessed are the poor *in spirit*", that is, blessed are those who have interior detachment from temporal goods, whether possessed or not; and who are aware of their own personal wretchedness and dependence on God's help. There is a noticeable difference between Matthew (5:3) and Luke (6:20). Luke in his account stresses the value of *effective* poverty or poverty *in fact*, to the extent that it is the sign of and also the means to interior detachment. "Blessed are *you* poor . . ." Real poverty remains a privileged path to the Kingdom. The commentators (J. Dupont, A. George, A. Gelin) are agreed that Luke materialises the poverty of the beatitude, whereas Matthew maintains the original sense.⁸

For Matthew the old legalism is surpassed, the Law is interiorized. Christians are called to "perfection", *i.e.* to a way of life. Perfection is radical obedience to the will of God as revealed by Christ. This obedience is demanded of all and not of an *élite*. It is animated by an interior dynamism of the believer which transcends a simple conscientious observance of the law. In line with this, Matthew proposes the first beatitude as, *Blessed are the poor in spirit*.

An interpretation of the first beatitude current among the Fathers of the Church and favoured by authoritative exegetes like Jacques Dupont, O.S.B., holds that "poor in spirit" does not here refer at all to the question of riches or material poverty but

that it is a semitic expression meaning humility and meekness. A *Qumran* text supports this.⁹ And although Matthew's gospel is not written in Hebrew, it does share the general semitic thought-patterns. Matthew, too, is the only evangelist to record the words of Christ (11:29): "Learn of me that I am meek and humble of heart." We can conclude almost certainly that the "poor in spirit" of *Matt.* 5:3 refers neither to the actual rich or poor, nor to any social categorization, but rather to humility and meekness which contain the fundamental spiritual attitudes of the true follower of Christ.¹⁰

The *New Testament* does not present poverty as a work of super-erogation for the Christian. Poverty is not an optional affair depending for its practice on the will of the individual Christian. It falls within the scope of the fundamental demands of ordinary Christian perfection and is not the exclusive preserve of the religious life.¹¹ There would not seem to be a basis in the Gospel for the traditionally accepted distinction between a precept and a counsel of poverty (See note 3). This does not mean that there is no basis in the Gospel for the practice of poverty as found in religious life today (*cf. Lumen Gentium*, n. 43); but it does mean that we cannot on the basis of the New Testament, set definite limits beyond which a Christian is *not* bound to go.

THE RICH YOUNG MAN

The basis of the traditional approach to the special counsel of poverty is the narrative of the rich (young) man found in all three synoptics. *Mark*, 10:17-22 is the original account which was reworked by Matthew and Luke.¹² Verse 17 reads: "*Good Master, what must I do to win eternal life?*" We need not imagine that this refers to some special state from which others are excluded or to some superior means of reaching eternal life. What he asks for is a juridical resumé of the Law from a

competent rabbi, (as in *Lk.*, 10:25 or *Mk.*, 10:28). This type of question was a familiar one. It demanded the opinion of the teacher on what constitutes the central core of the Law or the surest means of reaching the future life of beatitude. The response of Jesus is from "the Law of the *Old Testament*, a choice of commandments referring to the good of the neighbour (*Mk.*, 10:19). When the man answers that he has already observed all these from his youth Jesus does not contradict him, but tells him that one thing further is lacking: "*Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in Heaven; and come, follow me*" (v. 21). The condition for discipleship or for the following of Christ was in this particular case the renunciation of earthly riches. This is the only place in the Gospel where Jesus explicitly links together his call to follow Him with a renunciation of one's goods (implicit in *Mt.*, 8:20). The "treasure in Heaven" is exactly the same as the "eternal life" sought after by the rich young man; hence his "heavy heart" on departing. He had asked for the way to Heaven and on finding that it involved for him more than a simple observance of the Law, namely, abandoning his fortune, he went away sad. This was the way of salvation for him. He compromised his reaching eternal life by his love of riches.¹³ The burthen of what follows (verses 23-31) is that it is difficult for *anyone* to enter the Kingdom, but that what is impossible for man is possible for God, that is, on condition that man hears his call. The message is clear, that riches are effectively an impediment to answering the invitation of Christ.

At the time of the writing of Mark's account *discipleship* is no longer intelligible solely in terms of a special call to an individual for a function in the preaching of Christ.¹⁴ It is true that Mark does not wish to teach that renunciation of all goods is a *sine qua non* condition for entering the

Kingdom. On the other hand, Christ's answer to the rich man was not facultative for him. The radicalism of the historical event is only imperfectly applicable to the situation of all Christians, although it does directly concern them all. Mark, as it were, used a strong current to transmit the message. The radicalism of v. 21 is, perhaps, best interpreted in the context of the eschatological awareness of the early Church in regard to a future imminent Kingdom. At the same time we should not reduce the content of this verse so that it would mean a purely spiritual poverty, or by making it applicable only to a select group within the Church. The detachment from riches demanded for entry into the kingdom cannot be purely spiritual; nor is the invitation to detachment extended exclusively to religious. The call to discipleship is not made to a select group in the Church and the demands made by Christ on a group during his lifetime were transferred to all the faithful after the Resurrection. In the *Acts of the Apostles*, for example, we find that "disciple" has become the general term for a Christian (*Acts* 6:21).

RE-CAPITULATION

It is time we asked ourselves again the original question as to what is taught in the sources of the faith on the place of poverty in the Christian life. One thing is clear, that we do not find a univocal concept of poverty in the *New Testament*. It is not an abstractly formulated moral value whose significance for Christian living is unambiguously presented. It is a nuanced and complex reality. We could draw together the various threads of *New Testament* teaching on poverty under the following points.

1. The living of poverty is a dimension of the Christian life as such and not merely a counsel of perfection for religious. Pope Paul VI, commenting on the Gospel message of poverty states: "God's salvifi

plan is addressed to men detached from earthly goods. *Poverty is a constitutive element in the plan of the Christian religion*" (General Audience, 2 October, 1968).

2. Poverty is a witness to the transcendent value of the Kingdom. In this lies its eschatological import.

3. Christian poverty, as distinct from poverty as an ascetic practice of many religions, is intimately connected with the mystery of sin and the Redemption wrought by a poor Messiah, a suffering Servant. The practice of poverty by Christians is inspired by a certain mystical identification with the destiny of Christ in the mystery of his self-abasement (*Phil.*, 2) through his Incarnation and Passion. Poverty is a *kenosis*, an emptying of self. It rids man of every encumbrance and creates in him a void into which God can freely and unstintingly pour his grace.

4. The poverty of Christ himself, that is, his complete disponibility to the will of the Father, is a revelation of man to himself.¹⁵ Man is, as a creature, a gift to himself. He has nothing or is nothing that he has not received. Since he has a new and elevated destiny by grace he is doubly a gift to himself. The realisation of his utter (ontological) poverty before God should inspire him with a profound humility. Here we encounter the *Old Testament* and *New Testament* idea of poverty as meekness and humility; it is the spirit of the first beatitude, the fundamental disposition of the *anawim*, which finds its fullest expression in the *Magnificat* of Mary.¹⁶

5. Evangelical poverty also contains the idea of renunciation made for the sake of the Kingdom, as in celibacy. In this sense poverty "furthers the radical readiness for the kingdom of God, not because there is any value in pure lack of ownership in itself, or in bourgeois simplicity and contentment. It is not regarded (by Christ) as the mode of life of a community, but as the means of making missionary activity possible".¹⁷

6. Poverty is not presented in Scripture as a purely internal reality, although the whole value of poverty lies in the internal attitude or disposition. Material poverty does not automatically sanctify us. If it did, we would be bound to spread it rather than alleviate it. Theoretically, it is possible to be rich and to be detached from riches. But given the actual condition of man, poverty is effective only if it is embodied in some external form. Saint Luke in particular liked to recall the motives for material poverty.

7. Voluntary material or effective poverty (poverty in fact) does not simply mean despoiling oneself of dangerous riches. It was Luke who saw that we should not only *leave* our goods but that we should give them to the *poor*. The Kingdom is no longer seen in individualistic terms as the achievement of a purely personal salvation. Other Christians are seen to have a claim on our charity. In this case the practice of poverty is an initial realisation of the ecclesial *koinonia*, a practical step towards the promotion of the Reign of God in this life.

Poverty in the biblical sense, therefore, describes the real condition of sinful man when confronted with the salvation brought by Christ. It describes the appropriate disposition of humility and meekness that should characterize man's response to salvation. Evangelical poverty means furthermore, *the undividedness of man's heart* (in the biblical sense) when faced with the reality of the last things and the absolute need of making an irrevocable and unconditional choice. It means that simplicity of intention which chooses *first* the Kingdom of God and the detachments which this entails. Finally, poverty in the biblical sense, is the spontaneous choice of the loving Christian when aware of the dire misery of his fellow-Christians and his own capacity to alleviate their need. In all this the Christian conforms himself to the poor Christ.

SAINT FRANCIS AND POVERTY

The biblical understanding of poverty reveals a complex picture of a many-sided reality. It follows that there must be different approaches to the realization of that ideal. The *motivations* for poverty can differ, and it is not *a priori* evident that all the various possibilities of practice and motivation are mutually compatible within the same religious life.

There is, for example, poverty as a personal following of the poor and suffering Christ; poverty as a visible aspect of the eschatological representation of grace, which is the Church; poverty as an organizational principle of a community; poverty as a means of concentrating the forces of a community for the achievement of its task in the external world. Some of these motivations are compatible; bearing witness to the life of grace cannot clash with that of following Christ. But it is conceivable that a radically ascetical poverty could impede the possibility of real community life; and a poverty motivated primarily by organizational apostolic motives could preclude the possibility of its being a real witness to the eschatological nature of the Kingdom.

The significance of Saint Francis is felt at this point. An analysis of his life and writings shows that it is precisely conformity to Christ crucified and the witness to the Reign of God that was uppermost in his mind. The following of Christ poor, humble and naked on the Cross demanded, for Francis, a total self-despoilment. This is his motive.

If this is the case and if there is a real possibility of a clash between Saint Francis's motivation and other motives (in themselves valid) for practising evangelical poverty, then Franciscans must be prepared to regulate their practice of poverty in accordance with the ideal of the Founder. They must not attempt to realise all the possible goals of the religious life which

could in fact compromise the fundamental spirit of the Order.

What this means in practice is, that Francis's ideal (prescinding from its concrete realisation in the twelfth or thirteenth century) was primarily in the nature of a *witness to men of the transcendent value of the Kingdom*. In this Francis is fully in line with *New Testament* poverty and with the function of religious in the Church which is the sacrament of salvation.

It was sheer love of Christ and a profound awareness of the reality of God's Reign and saving grace that spurred Francis to renounce all things and sing the praises of his Creator. In a real Gospel spirit he so impressed on men the real value of the Kingdom that secular realities and values fell automatically into their proper perspective. Christ did not denounce riches; he ignored them. *This itself is his apostolate.*

There is in Franciscan poverty something very elusive to conceptual thinking or reasoning, something not measurable in logical terms or categories. The real content of his poverty is grasped only by direct contact with his own writings, with the *Fioretti*, Celano and Saint Bonaventure.

POVERTY IN SPIRIT

Deep in Franciscan poverty there is the spiritual attitude of seeing in visible creation and human events the hand of divine Providence.¹⁸ On the day of his disinheritance Saint Francis fervently uttered the first truth he had learned in the school of poverty: "Now I can truly say: Our Father who art in heaven". Here is the keynote of Franciscan poverty.

Poverty was not seen by Francis as a moral virtue or as one counsel of perfection among others. Through poverty he expressed his living *faith* in God as a loving Father, his *hope* and trust in divine Providence, his ardent *charity* towards God who in Christ emptied himself for us, taking on the form of a servant.

The poverty of Francis is a poverty

inspired by the gifts of the Holy Spirit: it is the foundation of perfection, of charity towards God and man, combined with living faith and hope in the incarnate Son of God. Such a radical and exalted idea of poverty is proper to Francis. In his perspective, to embrace the highest poverty is the best way possible to exercise his faith, hope and charity. This is his *way* to Christ, his way of living the life of Christ, especially of Christ crucified to the world.

Since then Franciscan poverty is one which is animated by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, it is not surprising that Franciscans have constantly aspired to higher poverty and have been from the very beginning of the Order involved in so many reformations precisely on this issue. The Spirit breatheth where He wills, and never ceases. Poverty remains the mainspring, the dynamic principle urging the Order in its many activities. Poverty is the touchstone on which the fidelity of the Order to its Founder can best be tested.

Also noteworthy in this connection is the fact that Francis never called his followers "*fratres pauperes*", as was fashionable at the time; but, true to the Gospel spirit of the "*anawm*", he called them "*fratres minores*", the lesser, humble brethren. Poverty of spirit in the *New Testament* sense of detachment is expressed in the final *Rule*: "Let them (the friars) beware . . . of all avarice, care and solicitude for the things of this world". Their trust was to be placed in divine Providence.

POVERTY IN FACT

Just as in the *New Testament*, so also in Francis we find a combination of poverty "in spirit" with poverty "in fact". The economic aspect of his poverty is well known: the total renunciation of property or proprietorship over material goods, even the goods that are necessary: "The friars shall appropriate to themselves *nothing*, neither house, nor place, nor anything at

all" (*Rule*, ch. 6). And this applied to the friars corporately as well as individually. He would have nothing to do with proprietorship. The brethren, he said, must be "pilgrims and strangers" in this world, vagrants on the face of the earth; and in this way always *dependent* on others, without worldly security. There can scarcely be any doubt about Saint Francis's own intentions in this. We are all too conscious of the internal disputes that centred around this issue when the Fraternity began to grow and absolute poverty was found impracticable; and how the legalists eventually solved the dispute by conjuring up a legal fiction whereby the Holy See would assume ownership, thereby preserving intact the so-called "juridical incapacity for ownership",—preserving, that is, the *letter* of the law, but not necessarily the *spirit*!¹⁹ Saint Francis was no jurist, despite the apparently juridical jargon of the final *Rule*. "To appropriate" something was understood by Saint Francis in a biblical sense; just as "without property" would mean for him, not simply the incapacity to place a juridical act of proprietorship but rather that we must never reserve for ourselves goods which God had destined for the relief of the poorer sections of the community.

In the external observance of poverty, it must be said that Saint Francis was very much a man of his time. He was deeply influenced by the poverty movements of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, which were directed against practices of lay investiture, trafficking in ecclesiastical benefices, simony, unworthy lives of bishops and clergy, and an incredible dearth of preaching. Besides, his reading of the Gospels was altogether too literalist. This is apparent throughout his writings. It seems as if he wanted to achieve a *physical* imitation of the actions of Christ. He understood the Gospel account (particularly of Luke) about Christ's birth, having nowhere to lay his head, too literally. Christ was poor, but not destitute. He

belonged to what would now be known as the lower middle class.²⁰ The Gospel accounts are more symbolic of his complete attachment to the work given him by the Father rather than literal accounts of a state of poverty below the average of his fellow-countrymen. It is true that Christ is found among the poor, and this in both senses: of the *socially* poor (widows, fishermen, carpenters, beggars), and also in the biblical sense of the meek and humble (Mary, Simeon, Anna). He seems to have had at least some rich friends, like Joseph of Arimathea; yet, these were the exceptions. Besides, if Joseph of Arimathea had joined the primitive Jerusalem community, he, too, would have renounced his wealth. The actual poverty of Christ was basically a theological reality. He was a poor Messiah and as such the Messiah of the poor. His mission as suffering Servant would be incompatible with any other social status. The actual poverty of Christ is intimately linked with his status and function of Redeemer.²¹ This deeper theological meaning did not escape Francis and ultimately his poverty was focused on Christ crucified and not so much on the private or public life of Christ. In the actual practice of poverty which he advocated he was, however, influenced by a literalist exegesis prevalent in his day.

The same must be said of his interpretation of *Luke 10* on Christ's mission to his disciples: "*carry neither purse or wallet, nor sandals . . .*" The mission of the first disciples and the instructions given to them must be understood in their context, and situated in the *milieu* of Palestinian hospitality which guaranteed that the disciples would in fact always have food and somewhere to sleep (cf. *Mk.*, 6:8; *Mt.*, 10:5 ff.; *Lk.*, 9:3 ff.; 10:5-10). This meant that their journeying forth "poorly" was not an extraordinary penance or ascetical exercise on their part. It symbolized rather the primacy of the Kingdom (*Mt.*, 6:33), their confidence in God's providence (*Mt.*, 6:25 ff.) and their

readiness to drop all things to follow Him.

Saint Francis's aversion to *proprietorship* and to *money* was also largely determined by his historical situation. The feudal system, characterised by the possession of the land by a minority, was already on the wane in Italy at the beginning of the thirteenth century. The towns or communes were rising up and revindictating their independence. A new class composed of wealthy merchants and craftsmen began to emerge, a monied class, who in time challenged the power and prestige associated with the ownership of property in land. Francis saw this. He lived it as the son of a rich merchant. This was the world of earthly ambition and greed from which poverty had delivered him. He was pitting the life of poverty over against that other life; and just as that world was fostered on pride and selfishness, his world of poverty would be nurtured on humility and charity.

PROPERTY AND MONEY

From the moment of his conversion Francis turned his back on the two things which at the time enabled a man to acquire power or dominion over other human beings: the feudal system of *property* ownership still surviving, and the *money* gained by the growth of commercial capitalism. In this he was prophetic. He intuitively grasped what fruits the seeds of capitalism would bear. He seems to have had a certain presentiment of future evils. The growth of industrialism in eighteenth-century England, and later in other countries, was accompanied by many evils because social and economic relations were largely based on a narrow pecuniary view of human labour—a "cash-nexus" outlook (Carlyle) and a negative concept of economic liberty which believed in a policy of non-State intervention in economic affairs. In an extreme capitalistic system some men are literally in the hands of

others who have money. This is precisely what Saint Francis rejected.

We who are sons of Saint Francis may well ask ourselves whether we have not gradually lost sight of his basic spiritual intuition and intention in rejecting ownership and money. Have we not displaced the centre of gravity and concentrated poverty in vacuous legal fictions? Only too often have we let it to others to declaim and condemn the abuses of a capitalistic system by which certain men, controlling the means of production, exercised an undue social and political power over the lives of the people. It is to our eternal shame that the corrective reaction to this social evil in the modern world should have to come from other, mainly atheistic, sources. We must bear the reproach that we have not been sufficiently present to, and active in, the working-class movements.²² Our solidarity with the humbler social classes has not been what it might be.

To centre a discussion on poverty today around the right to property and the simple use of money would be futile. This is where we must distinguish the historical Francis from his essential spirit as contained in his profound intuitions. Francis did not despise land or money in themselves. He despised them in as much as they were means or instruments which one man used to dominate another or others. By so doing man arrogated to himself the place of the Creator. This was the sense in which Francis condemned money and possessions. Furthermore, Francis generally did not need money. Money had not yet become the ordinary means of exchange for the necessities of life. It was a status symbol; a symbol of riches, of possession, capital, a means of power, even political power, dominion and capitalization; a sign, too, of abundance, superfluity and security. The poor of that time had no money. They were paid in kind. Barter was still an accepted means of exchange in the social economy of the time. Today money is no

longer a sign of riches. In fact one might say that it is only the "poor" who pay for things in cash. To continue the practice of not "handling" money while hoarding it in the bank is the type of pious fiction that begets cynicism and contempt rather than respect. In the same way "*sine proprio*", without property, in the mind of Saint Francis did not refer to the necessities of life but rather to superfluous goods, luxuries and anything that savoured of power and social prestige. His poverty was a renunciation of the false prestige of knight-errantry and of the bourgeois, of triumphalism, ambition, privileges and the force of arms. It was a renunciation of the condition of lord and master and an opting for the rôle of servant. In itself Franciscan poverty does not consist in an actual condition of wretchedness, destitution, misery or lack of what is *necessary* for the efficient discharge of the Franciscan apostolate in different countries and environments.

THE LAW OF NECESSITY

The operative criterion for Francis in the "poor use of things" was *necessity*. The word necessity recurs time and again in his writings, particularly in his *Rules*,²³ as the fundamental norm in determining the "poor use of things". What is superfluous is always and everywhere excluded. The difficulties and possibilities of self-deception lie in deciding what in fact is *necessary*. Francis himself, for example, was convinced that the use of money was not necessary for the necessities of life generally, except in the case of the sick, as we find in his *First Rule*, ch. 8. Later, he saw that money was not necessary even for the care of the sick, so that in his final *Rule* of 1223 we find the injunction that the friars "by no means receive coin or money . . . Nevertheless . . . they shall take special care to provide for the needs of the sick . . . according to places, seasons and cold climates . . . saving

always that, as before said, *they receive neither coin nor money*" (ch. 4).

Despite this clear and unequivocal statement, Francis, himself, moved by a genuine spirit of charity, used money for the needs of the poor, the lepers, even to save a pair of lambs, as his biographer recounts on more than one occasion.²⁴ Even in the lifetime of the Founder the friars who were missionaries were allowed (by the Bull, *Ex parte vestra*,) to receive money, again on account of necessity and for the sake of others. It is also remarkable that there is no prohibition in the *Rule* of the Poor Clares about receiving money. Notice, too, that the prohibition about money is always stated in the same way: "That the Friars shall not receive money". The title of Chapter 4 is the same in both *Rules*; and the same term is repeated throughout the text. In neither *Rule* does Saint Francis forbid the use of money. The German Franciscan scholar, Father Lothar Hardick, shows that it was only in the later biographical sources, when the juridical problem about the use of money was already in dispute, that Saint Francis was credited with being opposed to material or direct contact with money.²⁵ This is a distortion of the mind of Saint Francis; and it is quite evident that he himself did not understand the prohibition of money in a literal sense, because he actually used money (*I Celano*, 77, 78). What Saint Francis intended was to forbid the *Fraternity itself*, rather than the individual friars, to receive money, in which they could easily place their hopes and gain security.²⁶ However, immediately after the death of Saint Francis, the friars, seeing the practical impossibility of not receiving any money, concentrated the whole force of the precept in the direct use of money.

The law of necessity which guided Francis himself in the practice of poverty did not bind him to very much. There was scarcely anything which he regarded as really necessary for life, even in the line of food, drink or clothing. And so he pre-

scribed an almost total expoliation of material goods, even in common. But there are many things today which are genuinely and objectively necessary for the life and apostolate of a Franciscan, for example, in the formation of aspirants to the Order, and in the care of the sick and the aged, and in supporting foreign missions. Education is necessary in order to be effectively present to modern society. According to Francis's own fundamental principle of necessity, the provision of these necessities is perfectly lawful and in accordance with his spirit. Anything superfluous, however, belongs to the needy. In this we have the example of the first companions of Francis who were "free-handed and generous with all given them for the sake of the Lord, giving freely of the alms bestowed on them to all who asked, especially to the poor, for His sake" (*The Legend of Three Companions*, p. 43). "I will not be a thief; (said Saint Francis) it would be reckoned to us as theft if we gave not to one in greater need" (*II Celano*, p. 87). In this Saint Francis had a concept of poverty all his own. "As he saw it, God had placed things at his disposal that he might use them, but since they were only lent to him, he lost all right to keep them as soon as he met someone poorer than himself. The right of possession then passed to the poorer man and Francis would have considered it an act of theft to keep the object".²⁷

To say therefore that the friars *shall appropriate to themselves nothing* has very little to do (in the mind of the Founder) with a "juridical incapacity for ownership". This juridical fiction is convenient and has acted for centuries as a salve for our Franciscan conscience. Incidentally, it can also act as a screen which prevents us from having a good look at our actual poverty. To live without property means primarily to give to God and to his poor what is theirs and to use what is necessary

in as much as possible for the good of human society.

IDENTIFICATION WITH THE POOR

Francis never wanted to separate himself from the really poor. He never went back on what he wrote in the first *Rule*:

"And they (the friars) should rejoice when they are speaking with people considered vile and despised, when they are among the poor and the weak and the sick, among the lepers (outcasts) and among those who are begging by the roadside" (Ch. 9).

It would seem that Francis wanted his followers to be identified in some way with the poor. In the first *Rule* he forbade the friars who worked among other people to accept posts as secretaries or managers or any such positions of importance: "Let them be inferior and subject to all who are in the same house" (Ch. 7).

There are different ways of being present to the poor: helping them, educating them, bringing them the word of God, or participating in their life so as to raise them up. But for the follower of Saint Francis it seems clear that *the actual living of a poor life* is indispensable. This is the special charism which he must bring to the life of the Church. It is poverty and simplicity of life which must animate all the various forms of his apostolate. It matters little what that apostolate may be, preaching or teaching, mission work or parish work, manual work or social work, as long as any one form of the apostolate does not eliminate poverty in practice. The profession of poverty together with chastity and obedience distinguishes the religious from other forms of apostolate or function in the Church, but it is the practice of poverty which should single out the Franciscan among other religious. *The Franciscan ideal of poverty would seem to exclude anything which would jeopardise the possibility of leading an actually poor life.* One must, therefore, courageously withstand

today the temptation to compromise between the ideal of the Founder and the exigencies of a contemporary apostolate.

The *external* poverty of the Franciscan remains, of course, only the expression of a deeper, inner attitude of total dependence and total renunciation which flows from a burning love of Christ, poor, humble and crucified. And this renunciation involves not only material goods but also whatever we have received or acquired in the spiritual order. It governs our intellectual powers, our affections and our will. It penetrates to the innermost regions of the spiritual life. For Saint Francis poverty is not a single virtue but a whole way of life. It permeates the entire man at every level of his existence.

POVERTY IN PRACTICE TO-DAY

Franciscans' gospel witness to poverty to-day cannot be that of a thirteenth-century fraternity; the problem of transport is no longer one of horse-riding but of motor-cars and aeroplanes; payment in kind for service is no longer feasible, and so on. We are aware of the more obvious changes and have made some hasty adaptations. But the time has come when we must boldly *create* new forms of implementing the practice of poverty, forms which will really bear witness to the Franciscan ideal we want to present to the world. Simple adaptation is not enough. What Saint Paul creatively achieved in his day and Francis in his, we must achieve in our day creatively. The following are only some tentative suggestions for a reappraisal of our practice of poverty as Franciscans in the twentieth century.

First of all, poverty should not be defined in function of something else; for example, a religious should not equate poverty with dependence on the permission of superior for the use of things.²⁸ While this may be a useful check on the practice of poverty, it is not poverty itself. Our poverty must be *real*, not fictional. Actual poverty is relative

to the average *economic* condition of the people. It really refers to the amount of goods one has at one's disposal *as if* they were private property.²⁹ We need to rid ourselves of any fictitious poverty and casuistry, and strive for greater *authenticity*.

Furthermore, the poverty of the Order is a special form of witness in the world to the transcendent value of the Kingdom of God. It has a sign value and must therefore be *externalized*. Any form of interior detachment in regard to the use of temporal goods will be an effective witness only to the extent that it is embodied in some concrete, tangible expression of poverty. The actual poverty of a religious, however, is gauged by the communal poverty of the Order; and this for two reasons: (1) there can be no question of a witness to poverty as long as we remain within the relation of the individual to the group, a relation of economic dependence. A well-to-do organization cannot, as such, be a witness to poverty. It is the Order, the fraternity, which makes the impact on the people. (2) The individual cannot honestly be considered poor while he belongs to a rich organization. He may be dependent but he is secure in his dependence. Here again we must beware of over-subtle juridical explanations of what in fact is not the case. Not only must we be poor, but we must be seen to be poor.³⁰ This is possible only in a poor community and in a poor Church. We read today about the "Church of the Poor". But words are not sufficient to convince. Nor does it help to declare that our property belongs to the Holy See. *We should beware lest in making ourselves appear poor, we make the Church less poor!* It is a scandal that the present-day movement in the Church towards the poor—*Ecclesia pauperum*—should not have been inspired by the "specialists in poverty" but by others.

One must, however, be realistic. Any large-scale organization such as a religious Order must be prepared to have a modicum

of security and stability. This is particularly true where there is a big number of men in a city house, a college or school. But, precisely because of this necessary accommodation to circumstances we need to loosen our structures somewhat. We need today to allow more scope for *individual charismatic* expressions of poverty. The old structures did not support the idea of a worker-priest. Our own structures could not contain an Abbé Pierre. We might consider, for example, the possibility of small fraternities living in poor districts, taken up with whatever immediate needs the people experience, but keeping a link with some of the more central city houses. This has been tried in other countries such as France, Holland and Latin America. It may not be suitable for our own situation in Ireland, but our structures should be sufficiently flexible to contain such poverty movements. Pope Paul VI in his recent address to the General Chapter of the Friars Minor seemed to encourage the Order to break new ground in this direction: "Through social sympathy especially would we like to see you put into practice new and congenial expressions of your vocation of love toward the poor; towards inhabitants of slum areas on the outskirts of the cities, toward the unemployed and the underprivileged, toward immigrants, toward the lowly classes—in a word, toward those who more than anyone else need assistance, comfort, consolation and love".

QUESTING

The traditional distinction made between *questing* and collecting money (cf. *Code of Canon Law*, 621, 622) is, to say the least, questionable. Religious are considered by their fellow-Christians as wage-earners, in so far as intellectual and spiritual services are themselves "priced", so to speak. For Saint Francis, begging was never intended to be a regular source of income. Only when other sources failed were the friars to have recourse "to the table of the Lord".

And even then, he saw it as an identification with the really poor rather than a means of getting one's dinner. Today the really poor *work*. Only those who cannot or will not work are found begging. If, as Franciscans, we wish to identify ourselves with the poor and to give witness to poverty in our lives, we should do so by honest work. (Notice how Saint Francis placed Chapter 5 of his *Rule* on work between the two chapters on poverty, for no other reason than that he saw the intimate connection between them). Hard work is a meaningful witness to poverty in the modern world. Religious, like all others, are subject to the common law of work. And this is a value which is appreciated by our contemporaries. Emphasis on work is also more in accordance with Vatican II's emphasis on *service*, readiness to help, and to place ourselves and what we have at the disposal of the Church and of the common good.

HELPING OTHERS

Evangelical poverty, Franciscan poverty is, as we have seen, always conscious of the needs of others. Unfortunately, it is not at all evident that we religious are foremost in helping the poor and underprivileged members of society. We should be. We are expected to go a little further than handing out bread or what is left over from our tables at the door of the friary. There is scope here for a more scientific approach, especially *by helping the poor to help themselves*. Very often it is not prudent simply to dole out food and money to the poor. The following week or day the same people are as destitute as ever. It is better where possible to invest in social centres, clothing guilds and sociological "micro-projects" in which the poor are organised so as to get education and training in crafts. Such projects are designed to give employment to the needy either by setting up small industries or buying an area to be developed, so that the poor may finally stand on their own two

feet. This is a greater charity because it respects the personality of the needy.

Christian poverty is not an end in itself but a means to an end. The gospel concept of poverty can be fulfilled by service, by maximum disponibility which places us and all our goods at the service of the Kingdom of God and the good of society. The goods we have are on loan to us. We are simply stewards of them, and we must render an account of our stewardship.

SUPERFLUOUS GOODS

Each fraternity and each province of the Franciscan Order has a grave obligation to take a hard look at its actual poverty. Each one must determine what is really necessary and what is superfluous. There is absolutely no doubt about our obligation as Franciscans to distribute what is superfluous to those who need it. Accumulation of wealth, individually or corporately, is contrary to the will of the Founder. It makes us degenerate sons. The encyclical letter, *Populorum Progressio*, imposes on all Christians the obligation in social justice to help the needy, and this not only out of their superfluous goods but even out of their substance. *Perfectae Caritatis* n. 13, lays down that religious "*communities as such should aim at giving a kind of corporate witness to their own poverty*"; that they should "*willingly contribute from their own resources to the other needs of the Church and to the support of the poor*"; and finally that they should "*avoid every appearance of luxury, of excessive wealth, and accumulation of possessions*". This means that the major superiors of the Order should establish a realistic investigation of what, in the line of houses, lands, ornaments, maybe works of art and so on, are really superfluous in each province. This may be a painful process, but it is our bounden duty as followers of Francis. It demands good will and a sincere will to walk in newness of life. There is no shortage of deserving

causes for the money gained in this way, in the missions, for example, and in underdeveloped countries.

Furthermore, the friars who live in the more affluent countries should try by constant insistence in their preaching, writing and in their apostolate generally, to arouse public awareness and sensibilities to the demands of social justice and international charities. We are all aware of the necessity to form public opinion and of the power it has to move those responsible. We could in this way focus attention on the needy, even on an international scale, and goad rich nations to a greater charity towards the underdeveloped countries of the world. On the other hand, our brethren actually working in underdeveloped areas

can work on two levels: *first*, by participating in the lot of the poor so as to raise their standard of living as well as their hopes; by educating the poor and enabling them to help themselves; and *secondly*, by their preaching they can prick the consciences of the rich, bringing them to an awareness of their obligations in social justice and charity, and by pointing out to them the bloody, violent consequences that can attend the continuance of such an unjust situation.



We Franciscans, as sons of the Patriarch of the Poor and specialists in poverty in the Church, should be more conscious of

NOTES

¹ McCreary, Conan, OFM Cap., "Francis responds to the Needs of His Time" in *Annals of the Capuchin Province of Saint Augustine*, 1968, p. 40.

² Cf. *Lk.* 5:11; *Mk.* 10:28; *Lk.* 14:26 etc.

³ Cf. R. Schnackenburg, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*, London, 1965, p. 50: "The distinction between commandment and counsel is, therefore, not formally recognizable as such in the gospels, but only made clear later in the Church; but it has a biblical foundation. It should not be misunderstood in the sense of a morality on two levels. In principle, every human being who repents and believes may receive a special call from God, as can be seen from the example of the rich young man. This account must not be understood either as though Jesus offered two ways to a man honestly seeking and striving for the Kingdom of God, an ordinary one of the ten commandments and an extraordinary one of renunciation of his earthly possessions. He wished to make of him his disciple, and so lead him to the Kingdom of God. He left the man no choice . . ."

⁴ Cf. A. Gelin, *The Poor of Yahweh*, Collegeville, 1963; also "Les préparations bibliques de la vie religieuse" in *La vie spirituelle*, mai 1956, 474-494.

⁵ X. Léon-Dufour, *Dictionary of Biblical Theology*, London, 1967, "Poor"—p. 386.

⁶ See *Job*, 24:2-12; *Is.*, 11:4; *Ps.*, 72:2 ff.

⁷ Xavier Léon-Dufour, *loc. cit.*, p. 387.

⁸ A. Gelin, *Les pauvres de Jahvé*, Paris, 1953, p. 145 (Eng. trans., *The Poor of Yahweh*, 1963); Jacques Dupont, O.S.B., *Les béatitudes*, Bruges-Louvain, 1958; and "Les pauvres en esprit" in *A la rencontre de Dieu (Mémoires Albert Gelin)*, Lyon, 1961, pp. 265-272. A. George, "Pauvre" in *SDB*, fasc. 37, pp. 387-406, (1961).

⁹ In the Qumran text, "La guerre des fils de lumière contre les fils des ténèbres" (1954), we find the use of *'anwé-rûah*, "poor in spirit", as referring to those who are bowed-down (*courbé*), a metaphor transposed into the moral order to mean humility, meekness, etc. This Qumran expression—*'anwé-rûah* is akin to Matthew's *rûah-anâwâh*; and it means humility, obedience, meekness (Cf. *Is.*, 51:1).

¹⁰ The parable of the pharisee and the publican (*Lk.*, 18:9-14) bears out this interpretation. The pharisee is socially and economically poorer; yet it is the publican who is justified. The poverty demanded by the word of God is expressed in the publican's prayer. The pharisee is the prototype of the man who lacks the spirit of poverty.

¹¹ K. Rahner, "The Motives of Poverty" in *Sponsa Regis*, August 1962, p. 356: "Considered in its essence, the poverty of religious and the rich or poor life of other Christians show only accidental differences; the two cannot be separated into absolutely and essentially different manners of life".

¹² For the following exegesis of the "rich young man" passage we are indebted to S. Légasse O.F.M. Cap., *L'Appel du Riche* (*Mark*, 10:17-31 et parallèles). *Contribution à l'étude des fondements scripturaires de l'état religieux*. (Coll. annexe du *Verbum Salutis*), Paris, 1966; a remarkable, detailed, exegetical analysis of the Gospel narrative of the rich young man—who was probably not "young", since each of the evangelists has the phrase, "from my youth"; and he had already amassed considerable wealth.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 61.

¹⁴ The use of "disciple" for all followers of Christ is found in the gospels: *Lk.*, 6:17; 19:37; 24:28; *Jn.*, 4:1; 6:60 ff.; 7:3; 8:31; 9:27 ff.; 19:38; and in *Acts*, 6:21.

our obligation. We should, by word and example, give a collective witness to poverty in our lives. It would be a sin of omission if our Order were absent from that movement which inspires the generous hearts of our contemporaries to help the poor and needy. There is considerable prestige in being "poor" according to the

religious ideal, but there is little prestige in being actually poor. The Church is inviting us today to *renewal*, to evangelical *metanoia* or change of heart, individually and collectively. The world is crying out for greater *authenticity* and *sincerity* in our lives, and this for us, followers of Francis, means in the first place, authenticity in our *poverty*.

15 Cf. P. Pelvet, "La pauvreté du Fils de l'homme, révélation du mystère de l'Homme" in *Études Franciscaines*, XVI (1966) 150-164.

16 Cf. Barnabas Ahern C.P., "Mary and the Poor of Israel" in *Cross Currents*, II (1959) 279-291.

17 K. Rahner, "The Motives of Poverty" in *Sponsa Regis*, August 1962, pp. 354-355.

18 Cuthbert of Brighton, O.S.F.C., "St. Francis and Poverty" in *Franciscan Essays* by Paul Sabatier and others. The University Press, Aberdeen, 1912. (Papers read at the British Society of Franciscan Studies).

19 For a full account of the early history of the disputes within the Franciscan Order on the poverty issue we refer the reader to the excellent study of the Anglican scholar and historian, M. D. Lambert, *Franciscan Poverty (The Doctrine of the Absolute Poverty of Christ and the Apostles in the Franciscan Order 1210-1323)*, London: S.P.C.K., 1961.

20 Cf. "Faut-il canoniser la pauvreté?" in *Études Franciscaines* No. 44, pp. 365-381.

21 Cf. Card. G. Lercaro, Preface to *Église et Pauvreté*, Paris, 1965, pp. 9-21; P. Pelvet, "La pauvreté du Fils de l'homme, révélation du mystère de l'Homme" in *Études Franciscaines*, XVI (1966) 150-164; also M.-C. Matura, "Les exigences individuelles de la pauvreté religieuse" in *Donum Dei* (Cahiers de la Conférence Religieuse Canadienne, No. 2), Ottawa, 1960, 17-29.

22 This is the one reproach of Pope Paul VI in his address to the General Chapter of the Capuchins, Rome, 21 October, 1968: "We have often asked Ourselves why the sons of Saint Francis were not, as befits them, present amidst the working classes, preaching to them in homely language, sharing with them as they are required by their Institute to do, the bread hardly earned by the sweat of their brow, and uplifting them to bear in a spirit of joy the heavy burdens of life".

23 E.g. *The First Rule*, Ch. 9: "Let the friars confidently make known to each other their needs, so that they may find what is necessary and minister to one another . . . And when necessity shall arise, it is lawful for all the brethren, wherever they may be, to eat of any food that men can eat . . . Nevertheless, in time of manifest necessity let them all act as their need shall require and as Our Lord shall inspire them, for necessity knows no law". (Italics ours).

24 *I Celano*, XXVIII, 77-78.

25 L. Hardick O.F.M., *Franziskanische Studien*, 40 (1958), 41 (1959), 43 (1961), 44 (1962).

26 In ch. 8 of his *First Rule* (1221) Saint Francis explains what he means by "receiving" money: it is the same as "to collect or to have", to "seek after" money or to "cause it to be sought after". He warns his followers not "to search the world for any filthy lucre".

27 Cajetan Esser O.F.M., *Repair My House*, Chicago, 1963, Ch. 3, p. 83.

28 *Allocutio* of Pope Paul VI, 23 May, 1964, see *Review for Religious*, 23 (1964) 700; also Vat. II decree, *Perfectae Caritatis*, n. 13: "Religious poverty requires more than limiting the use of possessions to the consent of superiors; members of a community ought to be poor both in fact and in spirit".

29 Cf. B. Lecomte, "Sociologie du pauvre aujourd'hui" in *Église et Pauvreté*, pp. 177-183.

30 Cf. Y. Congar O.P., "L'application à l'Église comme telle des exigences évangéliques concernant la pauvreté" in *Église et Pauvreté*, pp. 135-155.



Their Majesties
King Baudouin and Queen Fabiola
of Belgium
pay
State Visit
to
Ireland
14th to 17th May, 1968



KING AND QUEEN DISEMBARK AT DUBLIN AIRPORT



PRESIDENT DE VALERA CHATS WITH THE KING AFTER GREETING HIM AT THE AIRPORT

KING BAUDOUIN INSPECTS A CAPTAIN'S GUARD OF HONOUR FROM THE NATIONAL ARMY ACCOMPANIED BY CAPTAIN THOMAS McGRATH. BEHIND THE KING COME COLONEL DE HEUSCHE, AIDE-DE-CAMP TO THE KING, WITH COLONEL TERENCE O'BRIEN





HER MAJESTY QUEEN FABIOLA WAVES TO THE WELCOMING PEOPLE AT THE AIRPORT. SHE IS ACCOMPANIED BY HER LADY IN WAITING COUNTESS SOLANJE DE LIEDERKERKE, MONSIEUR ANDRE SCHOLLER, GRAND MARSHAL OF THE BELGIAN COURT, AND MR. JACK LYNCH, TAOISEACH

THE TAOISEACH, QUEEN FABIOLA, KING AUDOUIN AND PRESIDENT DE VALERA TAKEN ON ARRIVAL AT ARUS AN ACHTARÁIN





KING BAUDOUIN PLACES A WREATH AT THE GRAVES OF THE 1916 LEADERS AT ARBOUR HILL WATCHED BY LIEUT.-GENERAL SEÁN MacEOIN, CHIEF OF STAFF, AND COLONEL PATRICK HALLY



HIS MAJESTY STANDS AT THE SALUTE BEFORE THE GRAVES AT ARBOUR HILL



SEMI FORMAL GROUP TAKEN AT ARUS AN UACHTARÁIN BEFORE THE OFFICIAL STATE RECEPTION. A SOILSE SINÉAD BEAN DE VALERA AND HER MAJESTY QUEEN FABIOLA, HIS MAJESTY KING BAUDOUIN AND A SHOISLE ÉAMON DE VALERA, UACHTARÁN NA hÉIREANN



THEIR MAJESTIES ARRIVE AT DUBLIN CASTLE FOR STATE RECEPTION

KING BAUDOUIN IS GREETED OUTSIDE THE DOOR OF THE CASTLE BY THE TAOISEACH





HAPPY GROUP AT DUBLIN CASTLE: THE TAOISEACH, MR. LYNCH, THE KING AND QUEEN, MR. AIKEN, TANAISTE, AND MRS. LYNCH, WIFE OF THE TAOISEACH



THEIR MAJESTIES ARRIVE AT THE INTERCONTINENTAL HOTEL, DUBLIN, WHERE THEY WERE HOSTS AT A LUNCHEON IN HONOUR OF PRESIDENT DE VALERA



Above: AT THE DOOR OF THE HOTEL HER MAJESTY, QUEEN FABIOLA, LINKS MRS. DE VALERA. BEHIND THEM FOLLOW PRESIDENT DE VALERA AND THE KING.



At left: INSIDE THE HOTEL, KING BAUDOUIN ACCOMPANIES MRS. DE VALERA TO THE BANQUET. BEHIND MRS. DE VALERA FOLLOW LIEUTENANT COLONEL SEÁN O'HOULIHAN, SECOND AIDE-DE-CAMP TO THE PRESIDENT.



HIS MAJESTY THE KING CONVEYS PRESIDENT DE VALERA TO HIS PLACE AT THE TABLE. ON THE LEFT ARE THE TAOISEACH, MR. LYNCH, AND HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

MRS. DE VALERA CHATS WITH KING BAUDOUIN DURING THE BANQUET





**THE TAOISEACH, MR. LYNCH, WELCOMES
QUEEN FABIOLA TO THE STATE
BANQUET AT DUBLIN CASTLE.**



**CHARMING PICTURE OF THEIR
MAJESTIES AT DUBLIN CASTLE.**



KING AND QUEEN EXCHANGE GLANCES WITH EXQUISITE EXPRESSION



Left: THE KING AND THE PRESIDENT GO HURLING

Below: THE PRESIDENT LEADS OFF WITH AS HIS AUDIENCE THE TAOISEACH, KING BAUDOUIN, COLONEL SEÁN BRENNAN, AIDE-DE-CAMP, MRS. DE VALERA AND MR. AIKEN.





KING BAUDOUIN PRACTISES THE PICK-UP WHILE THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE G.A.A., MR. SEAN O'SIOCHÁIN, LOOKS ON WITH THE TAOISEACH AND TÁNAISTE

THE TAOISEACH DISPLAYS THE EASE OF AN EXPERT





TWO STUDIES OF HER MAJESTY, QUEEN
FABIOLA.



CLOSE UP OF HIS MAJESTY, KING
BAUDOUIN.



MRS. DE VALERA WAVES FAREWELL AS HER ROYAL GUESTS DEPART. SHE IS ACCOMPANIED BY HER SON, DOCTOR ÉAMON DE VALERA, AND HER DAUGHTER, MÁIRÍN DE VALERA.

FAREWELL GROUP AT DUBLIN AIRPORT. *From the left:* COLONEL SEÁN BRENNAN, PRESIDENT DE VALERA, KING BAUDOUIN AND QUEEN FABIOLA, THE TAOISEACH, MR. LYNCH, MONSIEUR ANDRE SCHOLLER, GRAND MARSHAL OF THE BELGIAN COURT





THEIR MAJESTIES SAY FAREWELL BEFORE ENTERING THE AIRCRAFT

KING BAUDOUIN'S TRIBUTE

"I have to thank you very much, on behalf of the Queen and myself, for your kindness and courtesy in inviting us to your country. We have come at a time of the year when Spring has again put on its most vivid green.

"While Ireland thus reminds us that hope has long been symbolised in the very colour of her scenery, no one has, more than you, Mr. President, helped to transform that hope into reality, by bringing about the better times in which your country lives today. You have always been, in the noblest sense, the perfect model of the Irish patriot, and have personified the aspirations of an entire people. You have always identified yourself with them, and always kept to the programme you originally laid down, by saying that, 'It is not a question of what I want, but what the people of Ireland want.'

"The history of your country has been one long struggle to preserve the integrity of her soul. The fact of having kept apart from the Roman Conquest was enough to give you a character of your own, but, during the centuries when you had to defend and protect it under a foreign rule, that character became even more distinctive. History has made of you a people known for loyalty to their faith and traditions, dauntless courage, and a missionary spirit.

"Without that constant association of faith and courage, the venture you have brought to its conclusion, against all opposition, could doubtless never have succeeded. And, today, independent Ireland assumes the responsibilities of a major nation, in all their fullness, both at home and in all work of international organisations. Your country's emancipation thus crowned the efforts of a lifetime devoted to that noble cause. May God protect the youthful and vigorous State!"

PEACE HAS ITS VICTORIES

the methods and moral greatness

of

MAHATMA GANDHI

1869 – 1948

by

BEDA HERBERT

THE world stands in such urgent need of Gandhi's spirit and ideals that it might well repeat the supplication of the Indian poetess, Sarojini Naidu, uttered on the day of his murder: "Let his soul not rest in peace." He was one of the most courageous and consistent advocates of non-violence the world has ever known and one of its most intrepid peace-makers. For this he shared the fate of the Kennedy brothers and of Doctor Martin Luther King.

In his long and successful struggle to terminate British rule in India he wrote pamphlets addressed to his people very similar to those Pearse addressed to the Irish. In these he pleaded with Indians to realise their greatness, to cultivate their language, to promote their industries to the exclusion of British imports, to return to a system of education in accordance with their traditions, and make use of boycotts and non-co-operation against the materially superior force of the occupying Power. Both men were that rare combination of lawyer and poet and they proved to be the most practical of dreamers.

Mohan Gandhi, to be hailed later by his fellow-Hindus as "Mahatma" or "the Holy One," was born on October 2, 1869. He belonged to the Vaisyas caste, just one degree above the Sudras or working class. For generations the family had been grocers: "Gandhi" means "grocer". However, the caste system had long been melting away and Mohan's grandfather and father had risen to the rank of prime ministers of the princeling of Porbandar. Though he respected his father as a man of high principles and of simple life, he loved his mother intensely, and it was she who had the greatest influence on his character. She was a deeply religious woman, and found time, in the midst of her duties in her large family, to participate in temple worship and numerous fasts. It was the example of his mother which was later to make Gandhi such a determined champion of women in a country where they were kept in so low esteem. He procured economic and political emancipation for them, and protested against the injustice of the *purdah*, the absurdity of child marriage, the ban on widow remarriage and other matters which oppressed Indian womanhood.

In accordance with the custom he was later to condemn, Gandhi was married at the age of thirteen to a bride even younger. In his numerous attacks on this institution of child marriage he touched on a problem so much debated of late—birth control. He always advocated birth-control and opposed the use of contraceptives as a Western vice. He favoured birth control through self control. "Self control," he said, "was the surest and only method of regulating the birth rate." Without such discipline, he held, men were no better than brutes. This is but one of his many pronouncements with a topical relevance.

Six years after his marriage Gandhi's family decided to send him to England to study law since he was the only one to have persevered at school and to show promise. So we find him, while still a teenager, strolling around London attired in all the paraphernalia of the English gentleman, complete with silk top hat, morning coat, striped trousers, spats and gloves—very different from the more familiar later picture in loin cloth. Churchill described him as "that half-naked fakir."

However, Gandhi's deeper instincts soon reasserted themselves and he reverted to a more simple and austere way of life in accordance with Hindu practice and belief. He cast aside all frivolities and applied himself to his studies in London University, and in due course was called to the Bar by the Inner Temple. On his return to Bombay he practised for a while in the High Court, but he gradually realized that his extreme shyness, his lack of influential friends and his colour were formidable obstacles to advancement. But his destiny and that of India was set on a straight and ascending course when, in 1893, he accepted a post in South Africa as counsel to a wealthy Indian merchant named Abdulla of Natal in connection with a civil suit involving £40,000.

On his arrival in Durban Gandhi was quickly made aware of the arrogance of

apartheid and racial prejudice. He had already experienced a little of it from British officials in Bombay. But in South Africa he found himself ejected from first-class carriages because of his colour, and physically assaulted by the driver of a coach because he insisted on travelling in the same compartment with white passengers. He was thus shocked into awareness of the plight of Indians in South Africa, despised and hated by the Boers and humiliated by them in ways even more brutal and vindictive than by the British. We are reminded of the expression Pearse used of Emmet, which applied so well to himself: the dreamer woke a man of action. The shy young Indian barrister roused himself to seek justice for his fellow-countrymen and gain for them a rightful place in the community.

The immigration of Indians into South Africa had begun shortly after 1860 at the instigation of European settlers, who owned vast tea, coffee and sugar plantations but lacked the man-power to work them, since, after the abolition of slavery, the Bantu people could no longer be compelled or induced to continue working for their former white masters. The Europeans of Natal requested the Government of India to permit labourers to emigrate to South African plantations. The most impoverished districts of such Indian cities as Bengal, Bombay and Madras were combed by recruiting agents, who made lavish promises of rewards and conditions awaiting the labour squads. The flow of Indians to South Africa instantly became a flood and by the time of Gandhi's arrival there were some 40,000 of them indentured as workers in the Union.

These migratory Indian labourers worked so hard and conscientiously that in a short while many of them were able to acquire small houses and plots of land for cultivation, and to educate their children. This soon roused the jealousy of certain Europeans, and they called for

the repatriation of all Indians who did not renew their terms of employment, though this was already made difficult through the imposition of complex petty restrictions. This in effect meant that Indians were to be permitted to continue to live in Natal only in conditions of slavery.

A commission on Indian immigration was set up which introduced regulations to make it possible for a free Indian to survive in that corner of the British Empire. Then an effort was made by the Natal Legislature to disenfranchise Indians, but, owing to Gandhi's intervention, it was vetoed by the Colonial Office in London. However, the colonials found other ways and means of enforcing the colour bar so as to provoke and, if possible, drive out the Indians. The Boers in the Transvaal and Orange Free State were particularly aggressive. President Kruger quoted a passage of Scripture which is now being used against the Negroes elsewhere: "You are the descendants of Ishmael, and, therefore, from your birth bound to slave for the descendants of Esau."

It will help us to appreciate the magnitude of Gandhi's crusade and that moral greatness in him which conquered all bitterness when we recall that the whites in South Africa described the Indians as "Asian dirt to be heartily cursed, chokeful of vice." They were referred to in the statute books as "semi-barbarous Asiatics, or persons belonging to an uncivilised race of Asia." They were not permitted to walk on footpaths, or to be abroad at night without a permit. European hotels refused to admit them. They could be put off a train if a European passenger objected to their presence. In Boer territory they were forbidden to trade or carry on business of any kind. Yet, the *Cape Times* was obliged to concede that Indians were by nature law-abiding, useful, industrious and frugal in their habits.

Gandhi visited India in 1896 to bring his wife and children back with him to South

Africa, for he had dedicated himself to the cause of Indians there. During the visit he wrote pamphlets and gave lectures on the conditions of Indian workers throughout the Union and told how, on top of legalized persecution, they were robbed and assaulted, treated as wild beasts and unable to obtain either justice or charity. His words reached the whites of South Africa before him. As soon as he returned to Durban he was set on by a mob, kicked, and almost stoned to death.

It might be thought that the outbreak of the Boer War would have afforded Gandhi some grim satisfaction in seeing his people's oppressors at each other's throats for the hegemony of South Africa. But there was nothing vengeful or vindictive in Gandhi's nature. After some deliberation he decided to offer his services and that of other Indians to the British. He was at first brusquely refused permission to enter the army, and only after some crushing British defeats was he allowed to form an Indian Ambulance Corps, composed of some 1,100 Indians.

Gandhi acquired considerable skill in nursing the sick and wounded, on whom his compassionate nature worked miracles of healing. *Pretoria News* gave this description of him on the battlefield: "After a night's work, which had shattered men with much bigger frames, I came across Gandhi in the early morning sitting by the roadside, eating a regulation army biscuit. Every man in Buller's force was dull and depressed, and damnation was heartily invoked on everything. But Gandhi was stoical in his bearing, cheerful and confident in his conversation, and had a kindly eye."

In spite of this and many similar tributes paid to Gandhi and the Indians for their part in the Boer War, British victory did not bring any lessening of their burdens of injustice. Though their loyalty was not rewarded by Black-and-Tan outrages, as were the Irish later, fresh indignities were heaped on them. Gandhi decided to

intensify his efforts and devote all his strength and talents to the defence of his fellow-countrymen. He enrolled as an attorney in the Transvaal Supreme Court, and set up office in Johannesburg, which he used as his headquarters in his freedom campaign.

Men such as Gandhi must always appear as Quixotic in the eyes of the children of this world. Saint Francis of Assisi was once stoned as a madman because of his sense of priorities, and the world's peace-makers have been suspect and its saints ridiculed because they took quite seriously and literally the precepts of the Sermon on the Mount, which, in fact, Gandhi knew by heart and acted upon with consistency. His first biographer, Doak, recorded his impression of Gandhi at this period of his life: "He lives on a higher plane than most men do. His actions, like the actions of Mary of Bethany, are often counted eccentric, and not infrequently misunderstood. Those who do not know him think there is some unworthy motive behind, some Oriental 'slimness' to account for such profound unworldliness. But those who know him are ashamed of themselves in his presence.

"Money has no charm for him. His compatriots are angry; they say 'He will take nothing. The money we gave him when he went as our deputy to England he brought back to us again. The presents we made him in Natal he handed over to our public funds. He is poor because he will be poor.'

"They wonder at him, grow angry at his strange unselfishness, and love him with the pride of love and trust. He is one of those outstanding characters with whom to talk is a liberal education, whom to know is to love."

Such a portrait must inevitably remind us of Saint Francis of Assisi, and in fact many who knew him were struck by the similarity between the two great peace-makers. "His bitterest enemies", said one,

"became courteous when confronted by his beautiful courtesy." Gandhi, called affectionately by his followers "Gandhibhai" or "Brother Gandhi" was also noted for his consuming love of men, even his enemies, his untiring efforts to promote peace by inculcating non-violence and the spirit of forgiveness, his absolute poverty and simplicity of life. There were many ways in which Hinduism seemed to anticipate Franciscanism, especially in its respect for life and its love of nature, and his religion would have enhanced Gandhi's naturally Franciscan disposition. It is to be regretted that he did not read the *Fioretti*, or some authoritative life of the Poverello instead of the works of Tolstoi and Ruskin during his many jail sentences. As it was he seems to have been captivated by what we might describe as the essentially Franciscan ideals of those writers—their insistence on simplicity of life, for instance, and their glorification of manual work as a means towards salvation.

Gandhi's first important move on the resumption of the struggle for justice was the formation of the Passive Resistance Association in response to the humiliating Asiatic Registration Bill of 1907. Through his newspaper, *Indian Opinion*, with a circulation of 3,500, he instructed his followers in the techniques of passive resistance. The authorities replied by the Immigration Bill, passed by the Transvaal Legislature in the same year. It was heartily approved by General Smuts who, at that time, was often in conflict with Gandhi.

The great father of his people now began his famous Satyagraha—literally "Truth-Force Struggle"—in real earnest. A great bonfire was lit into which Indians flung their registration certificates. Gandhi and his followers were imprisoned at frequent intervals during the next few years.

Gandhi read Tolstoi's polemical works while in prison, and was captivated by their arguments for the simple life. In 1910 he decided to put them into practice. A

German architect made him a present of a 1,100 acre farm about twenty miles from Johannesburg, complete with dwellings and a thousand fruit trees. Here Gandhi set up his "Tolstoi Farm" and established a community composed of Hindus, Muslims and Christians. It was completely communitarian and self-supporting. All the members worked with their hands, including Gandhi himself, and there was an air of health, happiness and mutual tolerance about the farm which was the wonder of all who came to see it.

The following years were filled with the same sad conflict between the ruthless policies of the South African Government and the moral strength of the Satyagraha Movement, led by Gandhi. His arrests and imprisonments continued. In his periods of freedom he organized hunger marches. All the while General Smuts became more ruthless while Gandhi remained as forgiving as ever. The Mahatma was sometimes forced to break stones, but his courage remained intact. He even made a pair of sandals for the General who, in the end, was forced, after eight years of intense opposition, to admire the moral superiority of the great leader.

With their unerring instinct for exacerbation the authorities ruled in March, 1913, that only Christian marriages were legal in South Africa, thereby invalidating Hindu, Moslem and Parsi marriages, and converting all Indian wives into concubines. Gandhi, who had always been popular with the women of every class, now found powerful feminine support for his resistance movement. More demonstrations of civil disobedience, strikes and protest marches followed, with their aftermath of imprisonments, in all of which Gandhi was joined by his women supporters. In the end Smuts realized he could not jail 20,000 Indians and he began to negotiate with Gandhi in June, 1914. A compromise was reached which became law the following month. It removed the ruling on non-

Christian marriages and cancelled certain taxes on indentured labourers. Though Indians were still not free to move from one province of the Union to another, those born in South Africa might enter the Cape Colony.

It was regarded by the Indians as a great victory, whose essence Gandhi explained, was the vindication of the principle of racial equality and the removal of racial taint. Referring to the technique of civil disobedience he wrote in *Indian Opinion* when Western nations were already poised for war: "It is a force which if it became universal would revolutionize social ideals and do away with despotism and ever-growing militarism under which the nations of the West are groaning and being crushed to death."

In fairness to General Smuts it must be stated that he paid generous tribute to Gandhi in his contribution to the memorial volume issued in 1939 on the occasion of the Mahatma's seventieth birthday. Recalling that they were opponents a generation before he wrote that men like Gandhi "redeem us from a sense of the commonplace and futility and are an inspiration to us not to weary in well-doing. . . It was my fate to be the antagonist of a man for whom even then I had the highest respect. . . He never forgot the human background of a situation, never lost his temper or succumbed to hate, and preserved his gentle humour in even the most trying situations. . ." Returning the sandals which Gandhi had made for him as a gesture of friendship he observed: "I have worn these sandals for many a summer since then, even though I may feel I am not worthy to stand in the shoes of so great a man."

Gandhi left South Africa with his family in July, 1914, *en route* for India via London, feeling that greater conflicts and victories lay ahead.

Henceforth Gandhi's talents, amazing gifts of character and wealth of experience

were to be devoted to the cause of Indian independence. The Nationalist Movement, under the guidance of the intelligentsia, was already firmly established in India, but as yet its aims and ideals were almost unknown to the masses. As far back as 1885 the Indian National Congress held its first meeting in Bombay. Gandhi's twenty years' experience of fighting military strength with moral endurance, of confronting violence with non-violence, were a splendid preparation for the greater struggle awaiting him in his own country. Within a few years after his return he was given control of the Nationalist Movement, and retained it until his death in 1948, some months after independence had been won.

India had been overrun by other conquerors before the British invaded and occupied it. But whereas these others had in time become absorbed into the population, rather like the Normans in Ireland, the British regarded the native population with scorn, "as if", to quote one Indian commentator, "they were very much in the way (of the British administrators) in their own country, except in so far as they might be turned to the comfort and aggrandisement of the rulers." There was, he said, too much authority and arrogance on one side, and too much sensitiveness and servility on the other. The pattern is a familiar one to the Irish. When Gandhi assumed leadership most of the leaders of the Nationalists, like the old Fenians before Pearse, were exiled, or in jail, or disheartened. The Mahatma saw it was essential to rouse all the Indians by kindling their self-reliance, pride in the past of their race and sense of their own importance before they could drive out the usurper and gain their place among the free nations of the world.

India had even a Home Rule Movement almost coinciding in time with our own, founded by that remarkable lady theosophist, Annie Besant. Gandhi did not participate in the Movement during the

first World War and even undertook to refrain from political activity at that time, so as not to take advantage of Britain's distress.

Encouraged by hints and promises, similar to those made to Redmond in Ireland, Gandhi became a recruiting agent to gain forces for the British army fighting in Europe and the Middle East. British officials were amused and caustic at the spectacle of the leader of the non-tax, non-violence and nationalist movements touring India as an energetic recruiting sergeant. The strain nearly killed him. He had to walk as much as twenty miles on some days, and he became so ill that he prepared for death. It was the moral indignation occasioned by the notorious Rowlatt *Bills* which renewed his energy to take action against the perfidy, and, as he said, "the satanic conditions of British rule in India."

When the Rowlatt *Act* became law in March, 1918, India was startled to indignation, resentment and a feeling of base betrayal. The *Act* provided for the arrest of persons on mere suspicion and for trials without right to appeal to the courts. Even the possession of what any official chose to call a seditious document could be punished by two years' imprisonment. "The most notorious order of General Dyer," wrote Nanda, Gandhi's biographer, "required Indians to crawl on their bellies in the street where a European woman had been assaulted. Indians were made to alight from vehicles if a European passed on the road and salute him. A number of villages were machine-gunned from armoured cars and aeroplanes. Motor cars owned by Indians were requisitioned. Colonel Johnson ordered nearly a thousand students of Lahore College to march four times daily for three weeks—sixteen miles a day—in the scorching heat of May, to answer a roll-call."

The imperial technique of humiliation is familiar, and obvious similarities were in the mind of the philosopher Bertrand

Russell when he declared before the Indian League Delegation in 1932: "Who now attempts to justify the period of Black-and-Tan tyranny in Ireland? Who, fifty years hence, will have a good word to say for the present tyranny in India? No one. It is in our power to cause much misery, perhaps much moral deterioration; it is not in our power permanently to hold India by force." The noble lord has seldom prophesied with greater accuracy.

Gandhi accepted the challenge and began a twenty-eight years struggle against British rule in India which ended in victory. It started by an intensification of the Satyagraha and a nation-wide strike with renewed insistence on *ahimsa*—non-violence. As Gandhi was as passionately devoted to the ideal of non-violence as Saint Francis was to his Lady Poverty, and as that ideal has been so often misrepresented and, at the same time so often invoked in these violent days, let us hear what the Mahatma himself had to say. "I would like to repeat to the world times without number that I will not purchase my country's freedom at the cost of non-violence. My marriage to non-violence is such an absolute thing that I would rather commit suicide than be deflected from my position." And again, writing in *Young India* he explained: "I am not a visionary. I claim to be a practical idealist. The religion of non-violence is not meant merely for the rishis and saints. It is meant for the common people as well. Non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute. The spirit lies dormant in the brute, and he knows no law but that of physical might. The dignity of man requires obedience to a higher law—to the strength of the spirit.

"I have therefore ventured to place before India the ancient law of self-sacrifice. For Satyagraha (Truth-Force) and its offshoots, non-co-operation and civil resistance, are nothing but new names for the law of suffering. The rishis who discovered the

law of non-violence in the midst of violence, were greater geniuses than Newton. They were themselves greater warriors than Wellington. Having themselves made known the use of arms, they realized their uselessness, and taught a weary world that its salvation lay not through violence but through non-violence.

"Non-violence in its dynamic condition means conscious suffering. It does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer, but it means putting one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire, to save his honour, his religion and his soul."

Gandhi repeatedly stressed the essential truth that non-violence was not a negative concept. "If I had used the word love," he explained, "which non-violence is in essence you would not have asked this question (about its positive quality). But perhaps love does not express my meaning fully. The nearest word is charity." Its practical result was to make the more physically powerful assailant fight on ground not of his own choosing, and to overcome him by ridicule, surprise, indignation, inner doubt and sometimes by the nagging of conscience.

To many of his contemporaries Gandhi's policies seemed as Quixotic as those of the Poverello in his violent age, but in the end the greater wisdom prevailed, and the Wolf of Gubbio, if not entirely tamed, had its fangs cut. Gandhi had enough worldly wisdom to realize that an unarmed people had little chance against an efficient and heavily-armed oppressor, and to see that the use of violence so often creates more problems than it solves.

One of the chief reasons for Gandhi's success was his decision to take the Home Rule Movement out of the exclusive control of the intelligentsia and bring it to the people, by making them realize how their own destiny was involved and how

its realization needed their whole-hearted co-operation. And he was successful with his people because, as they said, "he aspired to identify himself with the least, the lowliest and the last." He mixed with the poorest, used a stone instead of soap for his bath, wrote his letters on scraps of paper with stumps of pencils, ate with a wooden spoon from a prisoner's bowl.

Though he disclaimed all literary ability and disliked pedantry, he spoke perfect English and wrote a considerable number of books and pamphlets. One, entitled *Hind Swaraj*, condemns the crudities of communist and capitalist materialism in terms very reminiscent of some modern Encyclicals. His deepest urges and ideals were, and remained, spiritual. He aimed to introduce religion into politics and when Western observers asked whether he was a saint or a politician, his followers replied that he was a saint who did not cease to be one when he entered politics—a very remarkable achievement. (We recall that the same question was asked concerning Pearse). One of the few things that made him cross was to be called a saint, and he rebuked those who called him "Mahatma."

Gandhi's frail body possessed amazing energies. We have seen how the Boers and British alike paid tribute to his endurance. And whenever strife broke out among his fellow Hindus, or between them and their traditional enemies, the Moslems, he undertook strenuous fasts, such as those during the riots in Calcutta and Delhi, and shamed the factions into making peace. "Brother Ass" as Saint Francis called the body, has seldom been so loaded and goaded.

It was inevitable that such a man as Churchill should dislike and despise Gandhi. The champion of British imperialism dismissed him as a half-naked fakir, and during Gandhi's visit to England the *Star* published a caricature showing him in a loin cloth standing beside Mussolini, Hitler, Stalin and de Valera, who were shown in black, brown, red and green shirts re-

spectively. It referred in cockney to Gandhi's absence of a shirt, but the "line out" was most inappropriate.

Gradually, under the Mahatma's gentle sway, India did regain her soul and sense of individuality. He attacked the British policy on education in India in terms very reminiscent of Pearse's, *The Murder Machine*, and called on all Indians to use their own language rather than that of the intruder and study the past history of their once great civilization. When the occasion demanded it he even addressed conferences in Hindustani to remind others that India did have its own language. He drew up a scheme for boycotting schools administered by the British, and set up truly national schools in their place.

The active promotion of home industries was another method employed by Gandhi to gain Indian independence. He employed methods familiar to us from the time of Swift. He persuaded his people to boycott English goods, especially cloth, and to make and use the native hand-spun (*khadi*) variety. This served to revive what had once been a very profitable native village-industry as well as to strengthen the non-co-operation movement, while at the same time dealing England a severe blow in her most treasured asset—foreign trade.

There were several very practical as well as idealistic reasons behind the revival of the *khadi* industry. Indian agriculture had sunk to a low ebb, while floods and famines continued to be an ever-present threat. Hand-spinning could enable the vast agricultural regions to earn a decent living and put a little money aside, besides saving the capital spent on foreign cloth. Gandhi went about the country promoting the *khadi* industry and advocating the public burning of foreign material. The biggest such fire was set ablaze in Calcutta in March, 1929, into which all foreign-made clothes were cast by the enthusiastic Indians. The movement succeeded so well that Gandhi formed an All-India Spinners Association

which, in a period of ten years, spread to 5,300 villages, and attained a membership of 220,000 spinners and 40,000 weavers and carders. Gradually the association fostered other village industries and came to have aims similar to our *Muintir na Tíre*—de-urbanization and the betterment of rural and village life. Gandhi even persuaded the upper classes and intelligentsia to participate in the movement and so make closer contact with the people from whom they had been too long separated by prejudices of class and caste.

Like so many of Gandhi's schemes, the *khadi* experiment which seemed so visionary at first, turned out to be of very practical use and linked up with the general pattern of his freedom movement. The decentralization of production in thousands of villages was related to the decentralization of political power—an important factor in his non-violent revolution. It avoided all the evils of mass production, which he so heartily condemned, and the evils of the factory system with its exploitation of human beings. He explained very coherently: "You cannot build non-violence on a factory civilization, but it can be built on self-contained villages. Even if Hitler were so minded he could not devastate seven hundred thousand non-violent villages. He would become non-violent in the process. Rural economy, as I have conceived it, eschews exploitation altogether, and exploitation is the essence of violence. You have, therefore, to be rural-minded before you can be non-violent."

This was but one of the many ways in which Gandhi used his delicate tact to overcome what he called "the hideous system of untouchability, the canker eating the vitals of Hinduism." It was proof, also, of his supreme moral courage, since orthodox Hindus gravely resented his attempts to overcome the evils of the caste system, as well as of his winning charm, since so many of them continued to hail

him as "Mahatma." As Louis Fischer noted: "Untouchability is segregation gone mad. Theoretically a device against contamination, it actually contaminates the country that allows it. Mahatma Gandhi knew this and he fought untouchability for the sake of the castes as well as the outcasts, but in fighting it he defied a thousand taboos and roused a million fears, superstitions, hates and vested interests." These untouchables, pariahs, performed all the menial tasks, and it was they who formed the major bulk of Indian workers in South Africa. Hence in bringing high caste Hindus to work with these untouchables Gandhi performed a miracle of social integration. But first he gave the good example himself, for he never missed an opportunity, even from his boyhood, of associating with pariahs and treating them as brothers and equals. Nor did he neglect to reprimand Hindus for the inconsistencies of the system. Swaraj or independence, he reminded them, would be meaningless if they desired to keep a fifth of India under perpetual subjection. If they were inhuman themselves they could not plead before the Throne for deliverance from the inhumanity of others. With further exercise of tact Gandhi began to call these pariahs, the "lower orders", *Harijans*, "Children of God," and later named his weekly magazine after them. In time *harijan* came to be an accepted term, supplanting the degrading titles. Gandhi had an acute understanding of human nature.

Independence for India loomed nearer, and it assumed clear shape when the British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, announced in the House of Commons on 20 February, 1947, that England would quit India "by a date not later than June, 1948." At the same time it became known that Lord (Admiral Louis) Mountbatten, a great-grandson of Queen Victoria, Empress of India, would succeed Lord Wavell as Viceroy—the twentieth and last.

But as Independence Day drew near,

Gandhi's heart was saddened by the shadow of partition and, what Mountbatten called "the pendulum of massacres" in Bengal, Bihar and the Punjab, wherein Hindus and Moslems slew each other in thousands.

Up to the very day of his assassination Gandhi resisted the idea of the partition of India, and regarded it as a blasphemy. On the other hand, Jinnah, speaking for the Moslem League, repeatedly asserted he would never accept a united India. Time and time again Gandhi strove to establish peace between his fellow Hindus and the followers of Islam, for which many Hindus condemned him as a Moslem fifth-columnist, and nick-named him Mohamed Gandhi.

Jinnah held the threat of civil war, and there were fearful riots to show the hideous shadow of things to come if Gandhi did not agree to the creation of Pakistan. Gandhi hoped that a period of non-violence would convince the British and Moslems that Hindus and Moslems could live peacefully together in a united India, but continuing outbursts of savage violence belied his hopes for the four hundred million people for whom he felt responsible. As Hindus and Moslems mistrusted each other too much, partition had to be agreed upon, and the Moslem Pakistani state, itself divided into two separate entities, 800 miles apart would exist in the predominantly Hindu nation of India.

Independence Day came on 15 August, 1947. Gandhi did not participate in the celebrations but spent the day in Calcutta trying to quell racial riots. As Louis Fischer, his latest biographer, commented: "Independence brought sadness to the architect of independence. The Father of his country was disappointed with his country 'I deceived myself into the belief that my people were wedded to non-violence,' he said. Indians had betrayed non-violence, which was more important to him than Indian independence."

The inevitable outburst of violence occurred as majorities attacked minorities.

Still Gandhi went about trying to establish peace between Hindus and Moslems. One such effort brought him to New Delhi on 30 January, 1948. He had fasted to restore amity and succeeded. Then he went to a prayer meeting to offer thanksgiving. As his followers pressed forward to salute him a young Hindu fanatic drew a gun and shot the Mahatma at close range. He died exclaiming *He rama* (Oh, God), a martyr to non-violence and charity among men, assassinated by those who did not approve his efforts to heal the rifts of religious and racial hatred.

For some years after Gandhi's death, matters continued much as he had surmised. The swirling, agitated flood-waters threw up confusing mud and debris, but they gradually subsided leaving a calm, deep and clear river. Under Prime Minister Nehru and Deputy Prime Minister Patel, with whom the great leader had more than once found himself in disagreement, independent India continued to progress, and gave proof that she could govern herself in spite of Churchill's dire prophecies to the contrary.

Some might include Gandhi among the sublime failures of the world as they included Saint Francis of Assisi, because at the time of their deaths their ideals, from a worldly point of view, seemed to have been diminished or frustrated. But in the end the ideals of such men of moral greatness prevail to work in the midst of the selfish, irrational mass of mankind.

Assuredly the world needs the Ghandian spirit of non-violence as never before, not only between nations but between social and racial groups, and we may expect new emphasis to be placed on his pleas of tolerance in this year of commemoration. The sincerest among his own people will pray that his unresting spirit will continue to traverse India to heal the hate-rent hearts of that partitioned nation by the illimitable power of his great charity for all men.

"In a heart Remembrance"

By

KEVIN FALLER

IN END OF LAUGHTER

*I have watched a tree all evening
stand in a field waving at cloud;
from your hands in my heart
my mind rises in drowsy vapours;
I do not sigh for the past or for the future,
I do not ask more than to have my thought
burst in leaf on the fingers of your hand:*

*Now you are with me in the fields of night
I feel as might a tree in autumn feel
at winter's first and little bitter breath:*

*Do not think I would have things different,
do not think I am discontented;
we have been happy and in end of laughter
is sorrow's end.*

GALWAY

*Houses of stone,
archways,
mill wheels
and weirs*

*and the flowing
of waters below*

my forty years.

FORECAST

*High winds
and tides today,
the weatherman warns,*

*and down the bay
stampede the unicorns.*

FIGHTERS

*In the square clash of light
Adrift on smoke they fight,
And blood since time begun
Steams in that cauldron;*

*Bells clang the minute's
Corner, seconds beget
The will to dare again
Leather, flesh and pain:*

*Until at last they come
From myth to stadium,
No two in all that crowd
Such brothers and so proud.*

WIND WITH VOICES

*The north west wind
besieges
December day;*

*outside
old walls delay
the sun in vain;*

*from downstairs
their voices
come again.*

EARLY

*In first light
and western breezes
go dancing*

clothes on a line hand in hand.

TREASURE SEEKER

*The mind like a deepsea diver,
More clumsy as the light is left above,
Moves uncertainly in the dark flood
Hiding a treasure trove;*

*The airline—an act of hope—
Endangered by the sharks of fear
Must lengthen with descent;
The one who tends the gear*

*Is also the diver:
The treasure in the sunless grove
Went down in an unremembered
Shipwreck of love.*

LIFETIME

*Along the way I bless
you with your names;
through me you pass
to ecstasy; till I,
as first at last,
do pass through me.*

SUMMERSET

*A darkening garden and a frail star;
in the heart remembrance, and faint and far*

fragrance dying in one forgotten cell
of self; there in autumn leaf summer fell
to earth's oblivion; there one who came
with summer said farewell, and laughter
scattered an image like a ruffled water:
the memory darkens far below a name—
a star without warmth, its own light lost,
whitening, brightening, in winter frost.

LAST WORD

My only word is you
as I am yours,
my soul is breath of you
who whisper me,
and from the claws of time
the word falls free,
and though the heart hold worm
the word endures.





MOUNTAIN MONASTERY

By

J. S. DORAN



THERE are few more desolate places in the world than the north-west corner of the great 80,000 square miles State of Utah. Yet this awe-inspiring, Ulster-sized tract of desert and mountain does not deserve the epithet "God forsaken", as I was to learn during my short stay.

Tucked away in a valley in the mountains I came upon a very oasis of peace and faith, that, in retrospect, dwarfs even the memories of Niagara, the imposing beauty of Salt Lake City and the grandeur of the Golden Gate, from which I had travelled east.

It was not to see Salt Lake that I rambled and hitch-hiked from lush California across the waste of Nevada and Utah, via Virginia City, Battle Mountain and the Great Salt Lake Desert.

My friend, a little Irish priest, whose first Mass I had served at home in Mourne, several thousands of miles away, had spent his life in exile, and was then pastor of

Saint Patrick's (where else, indeed?), in the Mormon capital. It was to see him again I had made the trek, and my journey to the shadow of the savage Rockies was well worth the trouble, if only for the hours of talk of home.

My approach to Salt Lake City was across a hundred miles of vicious, white, shining sand, in a July temperature well over 100° (death valley is a whole state away but it cannot be hotter or more abandoned). Our road lay along the low salt-caked shores of the Great Lake, in whose shallow, saline waters the teeth of the mountains were mirrored sharply. I could see the city from far off, draped on the foothills, with broad, tree-lined avenues and affluent skyscrapers, dominated by the massive beauty of the Mormon temple.

Once in the city I forgot the oven of its environs. My friend, Father Frank, drove me to the cathedral where he had once been an assistant priest, and then, with even greater pride, to his own little "Saint Pat's.", a wooden church with his home and new school in its grounds.

On his porch we talked far into the night and I learned that the Irish and Italians are the backbone of his flock, and that the Mormons, though the big power in business, banking, newspapers, land and mining in Utah, are most respectful towards the Church that is advancing with great strides in the State.

We seemed to have come full circle when I served his 6.30 Mass next morning. Afterwards he took me on a local tour. The country about has valuable deposits of minerals, particularly copper, and at Brigham city, away to the north, is a mountain with a vast crater round which a road from the bottom of the pit spirals, up a precipitous side, and scores of trucks transport the ore to the lip and down to the smelting furnaces in the city environs. Father kept the most interesting place to the last. Our road lay past the city of Ogden, fifty-five miles from Salt Lake, and then by the narrow

canyon that led to the peaks, where, even yet the snow clung. Keeping in the blessed shadow of the sheer walls we circled landscaped Ogden reservoir and snaked a further five miles on the good black-top road. All at once we were on a wide green plateau five thousand feet up. On all sides the range soared as high again. We left the tar-mac, and swung into a dirt road, little better than a country lane. It wound across the fields to the Trappist Monastery of Our Lady of the Holy Trinity. A comparatively new foundation, it was established in 1947, the Mother House in Kentucky supplying the thirty-four founding Fathers and Brothers. The community has grown and now numbers over sixty.

A wide drive leads to the entrance gate. The monastery is made up, for the most part, of quonset huts built in the traditionally monastic quadrangle, with a cloister garth, or garden, in the centre. It is dominated by the only stone edifice, the church. There are the usual chapter rooms, infirmary, offices, library, rooms for guests and retreatants, study halls and living accommodation one would have found in the great European Trappist foundations.

We were made welcome and went to the balcony of the church while the monks sang *Vespers*. After the age-old ritual we joined the other guests and retreatants at "supper" as the American call high tea. As is the case everywhere in America, the pickles, lettuce, pumpkins and melons were kingsize, and the hospitality of the community matched the quality of the fare.

In the lively talk at table we learned more of the Huntsville community. They depend for their income mainly on the produce of their rapidly developing farm. The virgin land is thoroughly drained and cultivated, and the splendid sprinkler system of irrigation gets the best out of it. There are fine herds of beef and dairy cattle as well as pigs, sheep and poultry. The wheat is stone ground and the "Monastery bread," as it is known locally,

is in great demand. Eggs, butter and several varieties of "Trinity cheese" are marketed.

In winter the plateau is deep in feather-light snow and the temperature drops below zero. The monks and brothers engage in light crafts and manufacture fine rosaries and crucifixes.

My supper companions spoke at length of the progress being made by the Catholic Church in Mormon-dominated Utah, and attributed this, in no small measure, to the prayers and good works of the Trinity monks and the reverence with which they are regarded for the respect in which they are held spreads far beyond the borders of the state.

Among those at table was a Yorkshire boy who had come out to visit his sister who was serving as an "exchange" teacher in Ogden, and who had stayed to give his time and work to the community. Two American youths were studying and working there in the hope of verifying their vocations.

It is hard for an Irishman to travel America and not feel proud; there are so many of us over there and so many doing well and doing credit to their country. So many crowd forward to claim Irish ancestry or say nice things about our race that we walk tall, and with justification. A young Paulist priest, at my side, told me he had finished his retreat and was going off to Korea. He made me swell with pride when, in reply to my remark that this was a wonderful place, he said, "Well, you can blame it all on the Irish. Only for them I expect we'd all be merry little pagans." Coming from him that was not self-praise, for, he was one of the few Americans I met who made no claim to having Irish blood in him.

But I was even prouder as we motored home down canyon in the twilight; we had met the young Prior, who, God be praised, hailed from the fine county of Armagh and I knew his father.



Gold fibula found at Clones, Co. Monaghan

OUR MOST ILLUSTRIOUS HERITAGE



Belt reliquary found in Moylough, Co. Sligo—detail.

THIS issue of *The Capuchin Annual* devotes its principal feature to a glance at the way of life in Ireland when for some four to five hundred years it was the country on which the eyes of all Europe were trained as the centre of Christian culture. That it can be no more than a glance, due to our limited space, goes without saying. Quite a large corpus of literature, excellent in quality exists, the work of scholars whose whole life's study has been devoted to this fascinating period of eminent achievement; many of their books are in our public libraries and should be read by every adult Irish person. They should certainly be familiar reading for everyone engaged in the work of our public information media.

We feature this period of Irish life with the co-operation of experts in each of the fields it covers so as to bring to the homes of our readers a knowledge of our most illustrious heritage. We do this so that it may be realised how proud we should be of our Irish identity and how profoundly we should cherish it. There are people among us, people who should know better, who think that Ireland is a backward, almost benighted, country with no cultural roots, who are convinced—wrongly, of course—that the centre of all high culture is outside Ireland. Any educated look at Ireland gives the lie to this.

A unique aspect of this period is that its glory endured not for ten or twenty years but for centuries. For so long a time existed rare excellence in the realm of heroic spiritual life. An apostolic quality of missionary journeyings throughout a Europe, that had been devastated by barbarian hordes, emanated from the Irish monasteries. Besides all this we created a rich literature in these early days and a sculpture that pre-dated artistically many renowned continental monuments. Our illuminated manuscripts of that time are without peer in the world and our art in metal-work ranks with the best man has ever produced.

Fortunately, a considerable number of our artistic treasures, which had been hidden during the years of spoliation by Vikings, Normans and later predators, are being discovered and are preserved in our museums and other sanctuaries but it is impossible to calculate how many of them still lie hidden or have been destroyed by marauding invaders. Also, through the length and breadth of the continent are artistic manuscripts and gold, silver and bronze ornaments that were wrought by Irish hands, as well as churches and shrines that were built by Irish missionaries. Our young people are not told enough about these things and we are certain that they would be of absorbing interest for people of all ages.

Our television authorities presented a programme, *The Course of Irish History*, which evoked universal interest and which enjoyed deserved plaudits from a large section of viewers. We regret that the same cannot be said of another programme, one of singular immaturity, *Into Europe*, which called forth more protest than praise. One cannot help thinking that the time and money taken to prepare that programme could have been so much better spent in visiting the museums, the art galleries and libraries, where the beautiful works wrought by our fellow countrymen of an early period are now preserved. Such a programme would be acclaimed by our people. It would acquaint our young people with places of special interest to visit when they go on holiday to the continent. If the time comes when Irishmen will go regularly to work in Europe they will know that they should go there with heads held high because Irishmen were there before them who are still remembered for excellence in their artistic work and their contribution to Europe's rebuilding. We trust this feature will stimulate our readers' pride in our homeland.

It remains for me gratefully to acknowledge permission granted by the Librarian of Trinity College, Dublin, to use illustrations of pages from *Book of Durrow*, *Book of Kells*, *Book of Armagh*; by the Librarian of St. John's College, Cambridge, for illustration of a page from *Southampton Psalter*; by the Director of the National Museum, Dublin, to use illustrations of metal-work and by the Monuments' Branch of the Board of Works to use illustrations of High Crosses.—*Editor*.

The Monastic Life in Early Christian Ireland

By

TOMÁS Ó FIAICH

I. ORIGINS AND SPREAD

SAINT Patrick's well-known reference in his *Confession* to the sons and daughters of the Irish kings who became monks and virgins of Christ makes it clear that monasticism was introduced into our country by the first Christian missionaries. At that time monasticism was still a comparative newcomer among Christian institutions. When Saint Anthony entered on the life of a hermit in Egypt some years before A.D. 300, he became the forerunner of numerous anchorites who, either in isolation or in small groups, made the valley of the Nile their headquarters during the fourth century. One of these groups came under the leadership of Pachomius during the first half of the century and he determined that they should live an ascetic life in community under a fixed rule. Thus was set up the first monastery. From Egypt the new institute spread to the Middle East, to North Africa, to Italy and to Gaul.

Whether or not Saint Patrick received part of his clerical training in Gaul, monasticism had already taken root there before the saint's return to Ireland as a missionary bishop. At Ligugé near Poitiers and at Marmoutier near Tours, Saint Martin, Bishop of Tours, had founded the first monasteries on French soil about 370, while at the beginning of the following century John Cassian's monastery of Saint Victor at Marseilles and Saint Honoratus's monastery on the island of Lérins off Cannes became influential centres for the spread of monasticism throughout Western Europe. Saint Patrick's mission to Ireland thus took place at the time that western monasticism was just "getting off the ground."

While Irish monasticism undoubtedly goes back, at least in some primitive form, to Saint Patrick's own days, it would be wrong to think that the saint organised the Irish Church on the predominantly monastic lines which it later assumed. He

would naturally have followed the episcopal organisation of the Church as exemplified in Britain and Gaul; indeed in his own writings Patrick emphasizes the fact that he is a bishop, and his later biographies, for what they are worth, record the appointment by the saint of numerous bishops in charge of local churches. The series of canons attributed to Patrick, Auxilius and Iserninus, the earliest piece of Irish ecclesiastical law which has come down to us (for which Doctor Kathleen Hughes has recently argued a sixth-century dating) shows a well-organised church divided into clearly-defined territorial units or *paruchia* (dioceses), each under the rule of its own bishop. Communities of monks, each under the rule of an abbot, are also provided for in the document, but the bishops are clearly the rulers of the Irish Church. Thus monasticism, though a feature of Irish Christianity from the very beginning, remained in a subordinate position for the first century of its existence.

It was during the second half of the sixth century that the great burgeoning of Irish monasteries took place. While the annalistic entries for this century show by the forms used for place-names and personal names in Irish that they must have been either newly composed or at least revised centuries later, there is no reason to doubt the general accuracy of the picture presented by them. And in the ecclesiastical sphere this picture shows that whereas during most of the first half of the century almost all the ecclesiastics whose obits are entered in the annals were bishops and only one abbot is commemorated, the bishops are in a slight minority during the second half of the century and are only half as numerous as the abbots from 600 on. That the second half of the sixth century was the era of transition from episcopal to abbatial government of the Irish Church is also accepted by the *Catalogus Sanctorum Hiberniae*, a ninth or tenth-century com-

pilation with an over-*simpliste* interpretation of changes in the early Irish Church, which was re-edited some years before his death by the great Bollandist scholar of Brussels, Father Paul Grosjean, S.J. Finally the second half of the sixth century was, of course, the era of Colmcille, who because of his close relationship to the greatest royal family in the land and because of his strong influence on the monks who flocked to his monasteries, must have made the greatest personal contribution to the growth of Irish monasticism at home. But even in the generation before Colmcille a few pioneer monastic founders were already at work, under the influence, it would seem, of churchmen in Britain.

One of the earliest of these founders was Saint Enda of Aran. Since his *obit* is not mentioned in the annals we can only guess at a date about 530 for his death from the dates of those who were later reputed to have been his disciples. He received his monastic training at *Candida Casa* in Scotland (Whithorn on the northern shore of the Solway Firth) and on his return to Ireland founded a monastic settlement on the greatest of the Aran Islands where a rule of great severity was followed. His most famous disciple there was Saint Ciarán, the later founder of Clonmacnois. *Candida Casa* certainly bore a high reputation as a training centre of monks in early Irish tradition, and other Irish saints who are said to have made their early studies there include Saint Tigernach of Clohes, Saint Eoghan of Ardstraw and Saint Finnian of Moville on Strangford Lough.

But a much stronger impulse towards monasticism than that provided by *Candida Casa* seems to have reached Ireland through Wales. Lives of early British saints like Saint Samson of Dol, Saint Cadoc of Llangarvan and Saint David have many references to Irish connections, but the lives themselves have little historical value and must be treated cautiously. However, the association of Cadoc with Finnian of

Clonard is unlikely to be a late invention, and the many Irish saints who are reputed to have studied under Saint David at Ty Ddewi (later anglicized Saint David's)—while not necessarily correct as to names—had probably a basis in fact. But it was Gildas, the sixth century's most outspoken critic of the British Church and nation, who probably influenced the beginnings of Irish monasticism more deeply than any of his fellow-countrymen. Finnian of Clonard corresponded with him on questions of monastic discipline and to his influence on Finnian may be due the latter's insistence on sacred study as part of the monk's daily duties. But the foreign influences on the early stages of Irish monasticism—even those from Wales—must not be pushed too far.

So we arrive at Finnian of Clonard as the great native father of Irish monasticism. *Aite noem nÉirenn*, the fosterer of the saints of Ireland, he is called in the homely phrase of the Martyrology of Oengus. Adamnan, in his life of Colmcille, calls him a bishop, but it was as founder and ruler of the monastery of Clonard that he gathered around him so many of the future saints of Ireland before his death in 549. He was presumably the author of the Penitential of Vinnianus, the earliest of our Irish penitentials. In this he writes both for clerics and laity and there is a strongly ascetic tone running through all his teaching.

Writers of a later period, with their passion for tidiness and symbolic numbers, called Finnian's leading disciples, in a colourful phrase, "the twelve apostles of Ireland." They included Ciaran of Clonmacnois, the son of the craftsman from Meath who after his training on Aran and at Clonard founded along the Shannon just before his death in his early thirties in 549 what was destined to become one of the most outstanding of Irish monasteries; Colmcille of Gartan (521–597), whose foundations included Derry (546), Durrow (c. 556) and Iona (563) and whose departure for Scotland in the latter year gave Irish

monasticism from its very birth a new penitential and missionary direction; Brendan of Clonfert, founder of the monastery there in 559, whose visits to Colmcille in the Scottish isles were probably the historical base on which the medieval legends of his sea-faring exploits were built up; Cainneach of Keenaught in Co. Derry, who after apostolic work with Colmcille in the western highlands and isles of Scotland founded the monastery of Aghaboe in Ossory where he died in 600; Colman (d. 549), founder of Terryglass. Molaisse (d. 564) founder of Devenish, Ruadán, founder of Lothra and Mobhí, founder of Glasnevin. When the personal foundations of all these are taken into account, it must be acknowledged that the "daughter-houses" of Clonard were both numerous and distinguished.

But not all the "founding fathers" of sixth-century Irish monasteries received their training or even part of it at Clonard. Among the "independents" one must place such noted monastic pioneers as Finnian of Moville on Strangford Lough (d. 579), Comgall of Bangor (d. 603), Fintan of Clonenagh (d. 603) whose austerity of life was said to surpass that of all his contemporaries, Molua of Clonfertmulloe (d. 608) noted for his tenderness to birds and animals, Colman of Lynally (d. 611), remembered afterwards as a scholar and writer, Kevin of Glendalough (d. 618) who combined the direction of a large group of disciples with personal life as a hermit, Jarlath of Tuam, Colman of Dromore, Senan of Inis Cathaigh, Fachtna of Rosscarbery, Finbar of Cork, all active at the end of the sixth century. Some of these were bishops as well as abbots, but it was as monasteries rather than episcopal sees that the churches founded by them were subsequently distinguished. Of later foundations the most notable was probably Lismore, founded by Mochuda (Carthage) in the 630's after his expulsion from Rahan in the midlands.

Of course not all the great sixth-century pioneers of the religious life were men. At the beginning of the century at least two outstanding female founders—Saints Brigid and Moninne—were active; and while the biography of the former by the seventh-century writer Cogitosus and of the latter by Conchubran both contain much legendary material, the religious houses which claimed them as their founders—Kildare and Killeavy (in south Armagh) had a noteworthy record in subsequent centuries and still bear the mark of their ancient greatness in their ecclesiastical remains. In the middle of the sixth century came Saint Ita (d. c. 570) whose foundation at Killeedy in Co. Limerick seems to have included a school for boys. For this reason later hagiographers gave her the title: “Foster-Mother of the Saints of Ireland,” but by the ninth century Killeedy had become a monastery for men. Other foundations for women which went back to the sixth century were Aghavea in Co. Fermanagh, founded by Saint Lasair, Cell Rignige in the ancient kingdom of Midhe founded by Saint Ricinn, and Clonburren in Co. Roscommon founded by the rather obscure virgin Cairech Dergan. Of later religious houses founded for women, the outstanding one was undoubtedly at Clonbroney in Co. Longford founded by Saint Samthann (d. 739). The latter’s name is almost entirely forgotten in Ireland, yet it has turned up recently in a manuscript prayerbook in the Public Library of Orléans in France which was written in the circle of Virgilius of Salzburg in Austria.

Mention of Kildare reminds us that it was the only example in early Ireland of a double monastery, shared by both sexes. Despite ecclesiastical prohibitions issued against them from time to time, such monasteries were fairly numerous on the Continent by the seventh century. It has been suggested by some writers in the past that their institution there was of Irish origin. Yet outside Kildare there is remark-

ably little evidence for their existence in Ireland. It is true that some monastic founders like Ciaran of Seirkeiran and Bóithe of Monasterboice are said to have founded monasteries for virgins near their main foundations and that other early saints are represented in their *Lives* as having groups of female disciples to whom they acted as spiritual guides. But taking “double monastery” in the fullest sense as implying that both sexes followed the same rule, were subject to the same superior and shared the same church, the most advanced example which early Ireland had to offer was at Kildare. Here, according to the seventh-century writer Cogitosus, both men and women followed the same rule, the former governed by a bishop, the latter by an abbess. The church was shared by both sexes and from the writer’s description of it about the year 630 it must have been then one of the finest churches in Ireland:

“. . . a new church has been erected in place of the old one to hold the increased numbers of the faithful. Its ground plan is large, and it rises to a dizzy height. It is adorned with painted tablets. The interior contains three large oratories, divided from one another by walls of timber, but all under one roof. One wall, covered with linen curtains and decorated with paintings traverses the eastern part of the church from one side to the other. There are doors in it at either end. The one door gives access to the sanctuary and the altar, where the bishop, with his school of clerics and those who are called to the celebration of the holy mysteries, offers the divine sacrifice to the Lord. By the other door of the dividing wall the abbess enters with her virgins and with pious widows in order to participate in the supper of Jesus Christ, which is his flesh and blood. The remainder of the building is divided lengthwise into two equal parts by another wall which runs from the western side to the transverse wall. . . . Priests and lay persons of the



General view of the enclosure of the Monastery of Saint Michael on the Great Skellig some eight miles off the coast of Kerry.

The oratory of Gallerus near Dingle, Co. Kerry.



male sex enter by an ornamented door to the right-hand side; matrons and virgins enter by another door on the left-hand side. In this way the one basilica is sufficient for a huge crowd, separated by walls according to state, grade and sex but united in spirit to pray to Almighty God."

By the end of the sixth or the beginning of the seventh century the new monasteries like Bangor and Clonmacnois were outstripping the earlier episcopal sites as centres of ecclesiastical life. For one thing they had almost unlimited powers of expansion, since the various houses which claimed the one founder (e.g. Derry, Durrow, Iona etc. founded by Saint Colmcille) tended to form a monastic federation or *paruchia* which was not circumscribed by the narrow territorial limits of the *tuath* to which the earlier bishoprics were confined. Irish princes, too, tended to endow monasteries rather than simple churches; the former were likely to be more enduring, especially as some concessions to the kin of the founder could be provided for in their foundation. Hence the later precept of Irish law that when the kin of the saintly founder failed to provide a suitable candidate for an abbacy, the family of the donor had the second claim to the succession. So powerful had some of these monastic federations become by the beginning of the seventh century that earlier episcopal foundations like Armagh and Kildare, in order to maintain a predominant position in the new scheme of things, imitated the example of the monasteries and proceeded to build up for themselves a *paruchia* or confederation of subject-churches and properties not limited by the bounds of the old territorial diocese. While it would be a mistake to think that no bishops continued to exist outside the monastic system during the seventh and eighth centuries, or that the secular clergy had been entirely superseded by a monastic one, the tendency in the direction of fuller monasticism undoubtedly continued.

Various references in the Penitentials, Canons and secular law-tracts emphasise that during these two centuries the bishop was not yet completely ousted or overshadowed by the abbot, yet even in Armagh by the end of the eighth century the superior of the clergy there and the successor of Saint Patrick was an abbot, not a bishop.

While a few churches may have continued to be ruled by bishops in the eighth century and even some by what we would nowadays call secular priests, all the great Irish churches from, say, 700 on were organised on a monastic pattern with a community of monks subject to the rule of an abbot. In some cases, as in Armagh, the abbot was still also a bishop, but in most cases, especially in those monasteries such as Iona, Bangor or Clonmacnois where the founder had not been in episcopal orders, the abbot was not a bishop. Where such was the case, one of the other members of the community was usually given bishop's orders for the administration of those sacraments and the performance of those ecclesiastical functions which required episcopal orders. But such a monastic bishop remained subject to the abbot in matters of jurisdiction, and it was the latter together with the abbots of the other great monasteries who constituted the body of ecclesiastical leaders of the country. Instead of the territorial diocese as the unit which was subject to him, the abbot ruled over widely scattered religious houses and their property, all of which owed allegiance to the one saintly founder. The abbot was thus somewhat in the position of an Irish provincial of a religious order today. Instead of ruling the sons of Saint Francis or of Saint Dominic, he governed the sons of Saint Colmcille or Saint Ciarán or Saint Comgall and the various religious houses and properties which they possessed. The essential difference was, of course, that whereas nowadays, side by side with the religious orders, there is a *corps* of secular

priests divided into groups on a territorial basis and each group and territory is under the rule of a bishop, in Ireland, from A.D. 700 on, such diocesan organisation seems to have ultimately disappeared in face of the growth of the monastic *paruchia*.

The year 700 is a convenient point to halt for the moment in our chronological sequence of monastic development and examine the internal life of an Irish monastery of the period. By that year the Irish Church was to a great extent monastic in its overall organisation and even those churches whose foundation had preceded the monastic era had been compelled to adapt themselves to the new situation. By then also some of the seeds of decline were already at work and it seems better to view the interior life of an Irish monastery at this stage before the various abuses prevalent from the eighth century on came to the surface. Finally the period around 700 was of course the period when Adamnan was at work on his life of Colmcille (written almost certainly between 688 and 692) and Adamnan's work is without doubt the most valuable source of information which we possess on the internal life of an Irish monastery.

II THE MONASTIC WAY OF LIFE

It is perhaps difficult for us to realise today that the vast majority of the people of an Irish monastery were laymen. All the great monastic founders—with one notable exception, the deacon Nessan, founder of Mungret—had been at least priests, and their successors until the seventh century continued to be so, though by then the era of lay-abbots was just "around the corner." Within the monastic community, however, only one or a few members were promoted to priest's orders for the celebration of Mass and the administration of the sacraments. Indeed there are some indications that in the seventh and eighth centuries the number of priests in Ireland was not very large.

Thus an early Irish canon waives the usual punishment of exile for a priest who sinned sexually after ordination "because of the fewness of priests," and the *Riaguil Pátraicc* (probably eighth century) allows one priest to have charge of a number of churches where priests are few. It would seem that later the office of *sagart* in a monastery, like the office of *episcopus*, had become simply a monastic position, although an important one, to be filled by the promotion of one of the community to priest's orders on the death of the previous incumbent.

The number of monks in a typical Irish monastery has been the subject of much speculation. References in early saints' lives to the disciples of Saint Comgall of Bangor or of Saint Finnian of Clonard numbering three thousand, if not sheer exaggeration, must be taken to include all the "daughter-houses" founded by the former pupils of these saints as well as the "mother-house." A more accurate picture is probably the one presented in Jonas's *Life of Columbanus*, who had about two hundred monks altogether in his three French foundations. Fontaines had sixty monks, and the Iona community which gathered into the church around the dying Columcille cannot have been much larger. While communities probably varied from a handful to perhaps a couple of hundred, the latter must have been quite exceptional over a long period.

One must not think of an Irish monastery in terms of huge elaborate buildings. It was really a collection of small cells used as living quarters with a few larger buildings for serving the community as a whole. A modern holiday camp made up of wooden chalets with a few community buildings such as a church and dining-room would certainly be closer to it in functional lay-out and architecture than a modern Mount Melleray.

The cells of the monks, detached huts made of wood or wattle and thatch, were usually round in shape. In some areas where

wood was scarce they were built of stone without mortar, the wall sloping inward to form the roof also, and these are of course the only ones to survive to the present day. The surviving cells on Sceilg Mhichíl are circular without, but rectangular inside. In Nendrum, which is one of the few early monastic sites excavated, the cell sites which came to light are almost circular in shape. In such cells the monks were housed in small groups of anything from two to about ten. The abbot at Iona had a cell of his own and this seems to have been the usual custom with the abbot in all Irish monasteries. With the increase in monastic property later—and a corresponding increase in worldliness and secular influences—there are frequent references in the case of the larger monasteries like Armagh to the *Teach nAbbadh* and *Lios nAbbadh* (the Abbot's House and the Abbot's Enclosure). But the typical Irish monastery of A.D. 700 was still in its architecture more closely related to the fourth-century monastic settlements in the Valley of the Nile than to the medieval Cluny or Monte Cassino.

Side by side with the living quarters of the monks within the monastic enclosure were the communal buildings i.e. the church, refectory and guesthouse. The church was normally the largest building, though by modern standards it must have been small enough. Because of its size it is called in various sources the *teach mór*, the *magna domus*, the *reclcs* (—ró—ecles), as well as the usual terms *teampall*, *eaglais*, *domhnach*. It was usually made of wood, “of smoothed planks closely and strongly fastened together,” as Saint Bernard describes the later oratory of Bangor. The roof was often of straw or reeds. Stone churches were rare at first except in those areas where no other building material was available, and several of these early churches survive in the western coastal areas and islands e.g. Inishmurray. On the rare occasions when the church was of stone this was of sufficient

interest to be given a special name, the *damliog* from which Saint Ciaran's foundation at Dunleek took its name. Near the church was the monastic cemetery where not only the monks but also privileged laity were laid to rest. Clonmacnois built up a reputation over the centuries as the graveyard of kings and princes, but Iona claimed a similar fame in Scotland (cf. Shakespeare's reference in *Macbeth* to the interment of Duncan in “Colme-kill, the sacred storehouse of his predecessors”); and Armagh also had its “royal mausoleum” to which the bodies of Brian Boru and his son and grandson were brought for burial after Clontarf.

Apart from the church the communal building of most importance was the refectory (*proinníach*) to which the kitchen (*cuiceann*) was attached. Here the modest meals of the monks were prepared and consumed. The kitchen had an open fire and a large cauldron for holding drinking water. Outside was a pool or washing place (*linn proinntighe*) where the monks on their return from the fields could perform their ablutions before meals, the forerunner of the very ornate *Lavabo* at Mellifont. Most monasteries would also have had a guesthouse which was sometimes placed apart from the main buildings. In Armagh it is later called the *lios oigheadh* (the enclosure of the guests) and had its own superior; in Clonmacnois it is once termed the *castellum hospitum*. The Rule of Saint Ailbe of Emly, which may go back to the eighth century, outlines in Irish what the weary traveller could expect from the guestmaster there. It has been translated thus:

“Blessing and welcome for everyone who comes to him,

A clean house for the guests and a big fire,

Washing and bathing for them and a couch without sorrow.

Some monasteries also had a library or scriptorium or a room which served as both, the *teach screaptra* (house of writings)

with its manuscripts hung from the roof in leather satchels, its wax tablets and stylos, ink-horns, quills and parchment. The well-known illustration of Saint Mathew in the Saint Gall MS. represents some of these writing accessories in the form which they had taken during the eighth century.

Workshops, barns, a mill, a limekiln and outhouses of various kinds would have been required by the normal Irish monastery, especially by those which possessed landed property. Some of these, of course, would have been situated outside the monastic enclosure. The latter took the form of a *lios* or *rath*, a circular earthwork surmounted by a palisade which afforded a little privacy and protection, or—in some districts—a stone *caiseal*. The remains of some of these enclosures still survive. That on Ard-Oileán off the Galway coast is nearly oblong and measures 114 feet by 70 feet. On Inishmurray it is smaller and roughly pear-shaped. In Glendalough it is very irregular owing to the nature of the site. In Clonmacnois it is both large and irregular. At Nendrum there were certainly two (and perhaps three) roughly concentric walls around the monastery, but this site may have been originally a pre-Christian fortress.

At the head of the monastic community stood the abbot, usually called *abbas* (Ir. *abb*) but occasionally *Pater* or *Senior*. The term *Princeps* is also used in the annals at an early stage for a monastic superior. From the ninth century on, it tends to give way to the native word *Airchinneach*, while for the greater monasteries founded by well-known saints titles such as *Comharba Phádraig* (the successor of Patrick) or *Heres Columbae* (the heir of Columcille) come into general use. The abbot seems to have usually selected his own successor, and some monasteries were inclined to confine the succession from the beginning within a particular family group. Reeves has shown that nearly all the successors of Saint Columcille until the early eighth

century were members of the Cineál Conaill, Columcille's own sept, while high offices at Derry and Drumcliff were also reserved to them. The medieval Life of Saint Carthage of Lismore declares that his successors as abbots of Lismore were always chosen from the Ciarraighe. Yet Professor John Ryan's, S.J., examination of the abbatial succession at Clonmacnois reveals that the abbots there were not confined to one population-group and for two centuries after its foundation they were chosen, like the founder Ciaran himself, from tributary peoples. In Armagh, despite spasmodic efforts to make succession to the abbacy hereditary at the end of the eighth century and to confine the succession to other monastic positions within particular families during the eighth and ninth centuries, it was only in the tenth century that one family finally made the abbacy their own.

To assist the abbot in his duties one of the monks usually acted as a kind of private secretary, called the *minister*. In Adamnan's *Life of Columcille* there are frequent references to the latter's devoted *minister*, Diarmait, with whom Colmcille was on terms of intimate affection. Columbanus had his *minister* at Luxeuil, first an Irish monk named Domoel and later a Frankish disciple called Chagnoald. In Bangor Comgall was attended by his *minister*, Crimhthann. During the period of hereditary succession in Armagh the lay-abbots were assisted by an official called the *fos-airchinneach* who was always chosen from the lay-abbots' kinsmen.

Also closely associated with the abbot in the government of the monastery was a small group of the senior monks, the *seniores*, often referred to by their Irish equivalents, *sruithi* or *seanóirí*, or a combination of both, *sruith-seanóirí*. On them devolved the general direction of the junior monks and novices, and from their ranks the offices of authority in the community were normally filled. Where the

abbot governed more than one monastery he appointed a local superior to rule over each of the subject houses. In the federation of monasteries founded by Columcille and in that founded by Columbanus, the local superior was called a *praepositus*, but the annals have no hesitation in calling foundations like Derry and Durrow monasteries rather than *cellae* and in giving their local superiors the title abbot.

Most important among the other monastic officials was the vice-abbot (*secnab* or *secundus abbas*), often called the *prior* and occasionally the *praepositus*. As the *secnab's* duties embraced the administration of the monastic lands and other material resources, his office must have been a continuation of that occupied in earlier centuries by the *oeconomus*, and in fact the latter term goes out of use shortly after the former becomes general during the ninth century. Because of the *secnab's* control of material resources it became fairly common during the troubled Viking era to appoint a local political ruler to this post. Other minor office-holders who are mentioned either in Adamnan's *Life of Colmcille* or in Jonas's *Life of Columbanus* are the guestmaster (*fear tighis*), the cook or cellarer (*coic, ceallóir*), the baker, blacksmith, miller, tanner, porter etc.; these titles are self-explanatory.

The Irish monks wore a tunic or long inner garment—that which Colmcille was wearing at his death is specifically described as white—covered by a coarse woollen outer garment, the *cochull* or *casal*, which was surmounted by a cape or hood. Sandals were constantly worn, and a staff (*bachall*) always carried on a journey. Saint Columbanus laid down that the food of his monks should be poor in quality and not taken until evening—other references show that the main daily meal (in Lent the sole one) was taken about 3 p.m. or at nightfall. Wednesday and Friday were days of fasting, one meal as in Lent but more or better food was allowed on Sundays, feastdays, during Paschaltide and when

guests were present. The staple diet of the Irish monasteries was bread. At Bangor under Comgall bread, vegetables and water formed the daily meal, but milk and milk products were later allowed. Eating customs varied from one monastery to another. In the monasteries of Colmcille and Columbanus, for instance, the eating of fish, flesh, game and milk products is mentioned on occasions, whereas in the monastery of Fintan of Clonenagh, which reputedly enforced the most severe régime in Ireland, no butter, flesh or milk was allowed, and vegetables were the only food. Beer was drunk in the monasteries of Columbanus and in many of those on Irish soil; a later hagiographical source also contains an interesting reference to a cask of wine which had come from the Franks to the monks of Clonmacnois. During the Culdee reform at the end of the eighth century Maelruain banned all intoxicating drink from his monks at Tallaght.

The daily life of the Irish monk was a constant round of prayer, manual work, study and mortification. Columbanus lays down that every monk should pray in his own cell, when entering or leaving a house, and before and after work. According to Adamnan the praying monks either stood with arms extended or prostrated themselves before the altar. The public prayer of the monks was the recitation of the canonical hours, of which the night-office was the most prolonged. The chanting of the psalms formed the main portion of the Divine Office; the long psalm 118, *Beati*, was considered in Irish monastic tradition to have a special efficacy and was accompanied by numerous genuflections. Mass was celebrated on Sundays and feastdays such as Christmas, on the feasts of some saints (such as Martin of Tours, Saints Peter and Paul and the holy founder of the monastery), on the weekdays of Paschaltide and on special occasions e.g. on the death of a friend. There was not daily Mass throughout the year. Mass was usually

celebrated at an early hour but could be postponed till midday on a great feastday. When several priests were present only one seems to have celebrated Mass but he might invite another to break the consecrated bread with him. Accepting the Stowe Missal as containing the Mass as celebrated in one Irish monastery—perhaps Terryglass—in the eighth century, we can deduce that the confession of sins and the litany of the Saints were recited before the celebrant came to the altar, that the Memento for the Dead was made before the Preface and included the reading of the names of the deceased, that the saints named at the *Nobis quoque peccatoribus* included Saint Patrick, and that the Mass ended with a formula *Missa acta est: In pace* almost identical with the present vernacular Mass in Irish: *Tá an tAifreann thart; Imígi faoi shíocháin*. Holy Communion was received regularly on Sundays and feast-days—it was usually given under both species. While the priests of the community were receiving Communion at Bangor, the hymn *Sancti venite, Christi corpus sumite* was sung. The Blessed Sacrament was reserved in small vessels called *chrismals* which the monks carried over their habit. Confession was necessary before Mass and Holy Communion, and in the case of grievous sins long or public penances might be imposed by the soul-friend (*anamchara*). Private penances or public penances of a mild character were systematically worked out by some of the Irish monastic leaders in their penitentials, and when introduced by Saint Columbanus on the Continent they proved particularly attractive to the laity and modified the whole penitential discipline of Western Christianity.

Manual work occupied a large part of the monk's day if the Iona system, for which we have fullest evidence, was the usual system in all monasteries. In Iona, Baithen, who succeeded Colmcille as abbot, assigned the different tasks. The various agricultural occupations — ploughing,

sowing, reaping, winnowing, bringing in the grain—are all referred to by Adamnan, the milking of the cows, the work in the mill, the kiln and the kitchen, the erection of buildings and the making of roads. The monks of Iona possessed a horse and cart, but also carried the corn on their backs from the fields to the monastery. Even the abbot did his stint of manual work.

The intellectual life of the more outstanding Irish monasteries reached a considerable height and was the result of a successful fusion of the Christian Latin learning brought from the Continent with the native Irish learning of the monks' homeland. At first the native language and tradition were suspect because of their association with paganism. The story of Colmcille's defence of the native poets at Druim Ceatt is probably due to some memory of his efforts to break down this suspicion. At any rate it seems certain that it was Irish monks who adapted the Latin alphabet to their own language and evolved the system of Irish orthography which allowed the native language to be written with ease for the first time. It was they also who developed the splendid scripts for both Latin and Irish which made them famous as scribes.

Sacred scripture held the central position in monastic education. Much of it was committed to memory, especially many of the psalms. The biographers of both Colmcille and Columbanus pay tribute to their scriptural learning—the latter composed a commentary on the Psalter while still a young man. Study of theology in the wide sense was pursued by means of 'Rules', penitentials, lives of saints and spiritual treatises. The Latin language had obviously to be mastered as a first step to all this, and Latin grammar (e.g. the works of Priscian and Donatus) and rhetoric were studied. Writers like Columbanus and Adamnan, the products of Irish monastic training, show a surprising familiarity with pagan classical authors. The transcription of

in hunc mundum actum meum est
 et iamentum factum apud de-
 & ego semper tecum
 Tenisti manum dexteram meam
 & inuoluntate tua deduxisti me cum gloria super prae-
 iudicium mihi est in caelo
 & ecce quid uolui super terram
 de peccatorum meorum conuersione condixisti mihi
 & posuisti me aduersum in aeternum
 quia ecce qui elongantur rectae peribunt
 perdidisti omnem qui perniciem abscis-
 nit autem adhuc enedictio bonum est
 ponere in domino spem meam
 / sua est
 ut ad nuntium omnes praedicationes faciat in puris
 /
Quid dicit ne peristi in finem / tuae
 in aeternum per non tuus super nouis per tuae
 memor esto congregatio tuae
 quam possidisti ab initio
 et in istis argumens tuae
 non per iniquos habitaes et in eo
 in aeternum in superbiae eorum in finem
 in aeternum in aeternum

THE CATHACH OF COLMCILLE

This is our oldest manuscript, a sixth-century copy of the Psalms in Latin, supposed to have been written by Saint Colmcille. Preserved by the O'Donnells of Tir Conaill for many centuries in a richly ornamental silver casket, it has been in the possession of the Royal Irish Academy since 1843.

The casket is on view in the National Museum.

manuscripts was a common occupation as early as the sixth century—Colmcille and Baithen, the first two abbots of Iona, were both accomplished scribes. The oldest manuscript written by an Irishman and now on Irish soil—the *Cathach*, a copy of the Psalter now in the Library of the Royal Irish Academy in Dublin—can be dated on palaeographical grounds to about the year 600 and is thus a precious and venerable link with the age of Columcille and Columbanus themselves. It shows the script then used in an Irish monastery before it was subjected to foreign influences during the seventh century. Ornamentation is sparsely used in it, but by the time we come to the *Book of Durrow* (middle of seventh century) the illumination of manuscripts has become a fine art in some Irish monasteries and we are on the highroad towards the production of the *Book of Kells* about 800. It will be noted that all these great books were associated with monasteries founded by Saint Colmcille, the first great monastic scribe and scholar of Irish tradition.

Many of the more important Irish monasteries had schools attached to them—Clonard, Bangor, Clonmacnois, Armagh, Devenish, Lismore, Rosscarbery and many others. The remains of a large stone school-house—of a later period—were discovered during the excavations at Nendrum. As monastic learning was transmitted by books, the term *legend* (— mod. Ir. *léigh-eann*, *léann*) from the Latin *legendum* became the Old Irish word for learning and many monasteries appointed a *fear léighinn* or *lector* to take charge of studies. Venerable Bede is only one of many foreign writers who paid tribute to the high standards of the Irish monastic schools in the seventh and eighth centuries. He speaks of the many English students who came to study in Ireland, where they were supplied with books and supported free of charge. Despite assertions to the contrary there is no evidence that Greek was studied or

known in the Irish monastic schools, and early Irish writers show acquaintance only with the alphabet and some chance words. Thus both Columbanus and Adamnan employ a few Greek words and Ferdomnach, the scribe of the *Book of Armagh* at the beginning of the ninth century, writes the *Pater Noster* and an invocation of Saint Martin in Greek characters. During the ninth century, however, the outstanding “Grecian” in Western Europe was the Irishman John Scotus Eriugena and several Irish scholars at Laon and Liège show some acquaintance with the language; but to what extent they had acquired their knowledge before leaving Ireland is a matter of dispute.

With the gradual fusion of the native and foreign elements in early Irish culture, the monasteries began to cultivate the native language also. A written Irish literature had certainly begun to arise by the middle of the seventh century. To it the Irish monasteries made a remarkable contribution over the next four centuries, from the religious poetry of Blathmac in the first half of the eighth century to that of Mael Ísa Ó Brolcháin in the eleventh. From monk-poets came much of the finest of the Irish lyric and nature poetry in the native tongue; from them came hymns and devotional prayers in Irish and Latin; from the monasteries, too, came the beginnings of Irish history in the annals and chronicles kept there, some of the most influential works of European vision and voyage literature, and, from the seventh century on, the earliest works of Irish hagiography. Finally it was in the monasteries that the epic tales of ancient Ireland, the *Táin* and other stories of “gods and heroes”, came to be written down and eventually transcribed into the great codices like the *Book of Leinster* and the *Book of the Dun Cow* and thus preserved for Irishmen of today.

Of mortification and penance in the Irish monastic system little needs to be added to what has been said above regarding food,

clothing, prayer and manual labour. To the ordinary Lenten period the Irish monks had added two additional Lents by the middle of the seventh century, the forty days before Christmas and the forty days after Pentecost. *Samhchorgus* and *Gemhchorgus* (Summer Lent and Winter Lent) they are called in the *Leabhar Breac*. To silence as a form of mortification Columbanus devotes a special chapter of one of his *Rules*. It was insisted on particularly during meals and was imposed as a penance for infringement of other rules. Curtailment of sleep was looked upon as an appropriate form of mortification. In Iona the monks had beds (probably of straw) and a pillow, but Adamnan tells us that Colmcille slept on a bare rock with a stone for his pillow. The Iona monks retired after vespers and rose for the midnight office; their amount of sleep cannot have been more than a few hours in summer. Austerities such as prayer for long periods with arms outstretched, repeated genuflections, prolonged immersion in cold water are also mentioned in the lives of some of the early Irish monks.

It is well known that Irish monastic discipline was strict, but a few instances taken from the *Rule* of Columbanus will show just how severe it could be. The smallest penalty, imposed for minor infringements of the rule, was the recitation of three psalms. Corporal punishment, inflicted on the hand with a leather strap, could vary from six to one hundred strokes. Twenty-four strokes was the punishment for leaving the gate of the monastic enclosure open in the daytime; if a monk left it open by night, the penalty was a special fast. Periods of extra silence, fasting on bread and water, expulsion and exile were other punishments. The most severe, imposed by Columbanus for murder, was ten years exile. Corporal punishment was nowhere prescribed in the Irish civil law tracts, and its introduction as a form of monastic chastisement is, therefore, somewhat surprising. When the Irish monks

went to the Continent, however, they found it, together with the more extreme fasts and vigils, opposed by their continental recruits and ultimately they were forced to modify the rules concerning such punishments.

Despite the austerity of Irish monastic life it was embraced in its fullness by thousands of the most generous of our people during the sixth and seventh centuries. By the year 700 Ireland's monasteries certainly numbered hundreds, and they continued to increase during the eighth century. From the much smaller population then in Ireland came religious communities as numerous as all the houses belonging to the religious orders and to the various orders of brothers and nuns in the country today. What had been once the refuge of an anchorite in search of solitude had in some cases been transformed into a small monastic "city" where the liturgy was celebrated, learning was shared out, kings and princes made donations, abbots sought to build and expand, and hospitality was dispensed. No wonder that Oengus, the Culdee, looking back at the end of the eighth century, would stress the growth of the greater monasteries which had ousted the prehistoric forts of the pagan kings as the distinguished names on the Map of Ireland:

Little places taken
 First by twos and threes
 Are like Rome re-born
 Peopled sanctuaries.
 Achill the king is vanished
 Vanished Croghan's fort
 Kings to Clonmacnois now
 Come to pay their court.
 Navan Fort is shattered
 Ruins everywhere
 Glendalough remains
 Half a world is there.

[From the *Martyrology of Oengus*; Frank O'Connor's translation.]

III. DECLINE, REFORM AND REPLACEMENT

Some of the freshness, enthusiasm and asceticism were gone out of Irish monasticism by the eighth century. The monasteries had now become the ecclesiastical "establishment"; many of them were rich and powerful, possessed of large landed estates which were farmed out to free tenants who made various payments in return. Strangely enough, it is to such tenants of monastic lands rather than to the men of monastic cells that the name *manaigh* is given in the secular law-tracts. Already, it would seem, the world which the earlier Irish monks had sought to leave behind them was finding a way of following them into the cloister.

The predominance of non-clerics in the monastic community from the beginning and the tendency of some monasteries, already noticed, to choose their abbots from the same family circle made it an easy and almost inevitable step to proceed to the choice of an abbot who was not in major orders. There is plenty of evidence from the eighth century of monasteries where by that time succession to the abbacy was passing from father to son. The Reverend Robert King worked out in the last century the succession to a number of abbacies in the east of the country, such as Lusk, and showed that hereditary succession was common in them. Doctor Kathleen Hughes has recently examined the question more fully and provides evidence for succession from father to son in Lusk, Slane, Monasterboice, Aghaboe among others. By the end of the eighth century a son succeeded his father in Armagh, where the successor of Saint Patrick was now apparently a layman. He was a member of the *Ui Sinaigh* sept which would later hold the abbacy there in unbroken succession for over a century and a half from the tenth until the twelfth century. Although a prophecy attributed to *Bec Mac De* listed *An mac i ndiaidh an*

athar in Ard Macha as one of the horrors that would strike Ireland in later days, there is no reason to think that contemporaries were particularly shocked by it, and we should not exaggerate its supposed evil consequences. What was a much clearer sign of monastic decline in the eighth century was the quarrels between important monasteries, which on occasions were settled on the battlefield. Thus the record in the annals of the victory of Clonmacnois over Durrow in 764, in which two hundred men of the *familia* of Durrow lost their lives, makes sad reading, even if, as has been suggested, the fighting men on both sides were mainly or exclusively the tenants on the monastic lands. Nor were the monasteries free even from the monastic equivalents of civil war and political assassination, for an occasional entry in the annals shows battles fought between rival claimants to a particular monastic position. A later note in the *Book of Leinster* indicates that in 795 one "abbot" of Armagh perished at the hands of another.

A notable effort to revive the ascetic spirit of Irish monasticisms and eradicate the laxity which led to the above abuses was the Culdee movement at the end of the eighth century. With their evocative name *Ceile De*, the clients of God, they aimed to provide a higher and purer form of clerical observance within the larger and laxer community. The new foundation at Tallaght became their most noted centre under its founder Maelruain (d. 792), but later groups of Culdees are to be found in the older monasteries such as Armagh where they seem to have provided the religious element in a community which was otherwise largely secularized. A strict enforcement of clerical celibacy, of Sunday observance and of ascetic practices characterized the movement, which had also much of the early Franciscan spirit; simplicity, humanism, closeness to nature and an affection for the animals and birds. Yet despite the noble efforts of the *Ceili*

De, many of the older monasteries remained largely unaffected by them or simply accommodated themselves to the new call for reform by instituting a community of stricter observance side by side with their more worldly brethren. Thus the practice of hereditary succession continued in several monasteries—again largely in the kingdom of Midhe; monastic battles were still fought and won; rivalry about monastic posts continued; and local kings and princes often destroyed monastic buildings and laid violent hands on their occupants. It is necessary to emphasise that the abuses mentioned above were all to be found in Ireland before the Viking attacks made the monasteries one of their main targets.

At first it was the monasteries near the coast which suffered most. Iona was an early target for Viking raids and most of the community seem to have moved to Kells at the beginning of the ninth century, perhaps bringing with them the unfinished *Book of Kells*. Those who remained on the island were martyred in a later attack. Sceilg Mhichíl, Moville, Armagh, Glendalough, Clonard, Duleek, Clonmacnois were only a few of the more important or more interesting monastic establishments to suffer during the ninth century. In fact Armagh was plundered three times in one month. The Irish visitor to the museums of Copenhagen, Stockholm and Bergen today will see some of the treasures looted from the monasteries of his homeland a thousand years ago. Yet it would be wrong to think that the Viking invasion made life in the monasteries impossible. The first wave of raiders and looters was followed by other waves of settlers, and by the tenth century some of these were accepting Christianity. Although the illuminated manuscripts and portable metalwork were an easy prey, and hardly reached during the rest of the Viking period the summit which they had attained at its beginning with the *Book of Kells* and the *Ardagh Chalice*, one form of monastic art

flourished throughout the Viking era. This was the sculpture of free-standing crosses. If we take Muiredach's Cross at Monasterboice to represent Irish monastic sculpture at its best, it was being carved in the early tenth century when the tide of battle between Gael and Gall was just beginning to turn in favour of the Gael. That was the era, too, of the building of the round towers, so that instead of succumbing to the Norse attacks, the Irish monasteries adapted themselves physically to the new situation.

Hence when the monasteries emerged into greater freedom after the victory of Clontarf, they were still, despite the violence of recent centuries and the secularization of their leadership in many cases, live centres of religious life and of learning, both ecclesiastical and secular. Take Armagh as an example of a monastery which had been often sacked and in which by the eleventh century almost all the positions of importance had come into the hands of the local aristocracy. From 965 until 1134 all the abbots were laymen and belonged to the one family; which also supplied all the *fos-airchinnigh* during the same period. At least three of the *secnabs* or priors of the period belonged to another local noble family and bore the relationship of father, son and grandson. Of the ten bishops who functioned in the monastery during the same era there is no proof that many belonged to the one family, but the genealogies suggest that one of them was the grandson of another. Of those who held the office of priest in the monastery during this period of over a century and a half, the genealogies help us to identify the first two as father and son, and the next four as father, son, cousin and grandson. Those recorded in the annals as heads of the guesthouse all bear the same surname, as do those recorded as heads of the poor. Yet despite all this hereditary succession and the fact that clerical celibacy was no longer enforced to the extent which the



Doorway from Teampall na Naoimh, Inchagoill, Lough Corrib.

early monastic founders had insisted upon, Armagh continued to be a centre of religion and learning. True, the annals no longer list the obits of anchorites in Armagh during this period, yet kings and abbots of other monasteries still came to die there in penance and pilgrimage. Church buildings continued to be erected and embellished, and when Brian Boru visited the monastery a decade before Clontarf and placed his gift of gold on Saint Patrick's altar—a visit which is commemorated in the *Book of Armagh*—he does not seem to have shown any surprise that the abbot who received him as successor of Saint Patrick was a married layman. It was such a lay-abbot, too, who nearly a century later, led the Irish clergy in a great fast in 1096. Nor was learning despised in the monastery which had become so largely laicized. Saint Bernard, in his life of Saint Malachy, despite his strong attack on the Armagh abbots as married men without orders was fair-minded enough to concede that they were educated men: *virī uxorati et absque ordinibus, litterati tamen*. Some of the abbots themselves were poets and chroniclers; a whole series of *fir leiginn* was maintained in the monastery throughout the period; a school with many scholars was in existence; the *scriptorium* survived and was still able to produce as fine a manuscript as the *Codex Maelbrighde* in the twelfth century. An occasional foreign scholar still came in search of learning, and only a generation after the reign of lay-abbots had come to an end Armagh had sufficient eminence among Irish educational centres to secure a status akin to that of a national university or *Ecole normale*.

What has been said of Armagh can stand for all the greater monasteries. There had been a fundamental change in their spirit and rule; they were now in their own way akin to the great monasteries of the baroque era; but worldly influences did not prevent the continued existence of a religious and ascetic elite within them. Similarly, their

scholars were still at work, but they now wrote mainly in the native tongue, adding to the Latin learning of their founders the vernacular learning of the country and producing the great codices of the twelfth century. Finally, it was the tenth and eleventh century Irish monasteries, for all their faults, which sent a new stream of monastic founders abroad. Cadroe, associated with the foundation of Waulsort in Belgium, one of the earliest of the new-style Irish abbeys abroad, was educated in Armagh. Later in the tenth century the two monasteries of Saint Clement and Saint Symphorian in Metz, the abbey of Saint Vannes at Verdun and the famous monastery of Gross Saint Martin in Cologne (its church still, alas, in ruins since World War II) were in the hands of Irish monks. The following century brought one Marianus Scottus to Mainz where he wrote his celebrated chronicle, and another to Regensburg which became, in turn, the motherhouse of about a dozen new Irish foundations in Southern Germany and Austria during the twelfth century. It is necessary to stress that all this was accomplished while the Irish Church was still organised on monastic lines or going through the painful process of transformation. The reform of the Church in Ireland which was accomplished in the twelfth century may have been necessary in order to bring it into line with the rest of Europe; but the "unreformed" Irish Church cannot have been all that bad since it built Cormac's Chapel, compiled the *Book of Leinster*, copied the *Tain*, founded the *Schottenkloester* of Germany and Austria, and gave birth to the only two Irish saints who, having remained working among their countrymen, were canonized by Rome.

The twelfth-century reform, however, brought Irish monasticism in the full sense of that term to an end. The new Irish monasteries founded on the Continent from the tenth century on followed the Benedictine Rule rather than the pre-

scriptions laid down by a Finnian, a Comgall or a Columban, and even the earlier Irish foundations on the continent like Luxeuil, St. Gall, Bobbio, Lagny and others had long since abandoned the rule of their founders for the milder Benedictine regime. At home the introduction of the Cistercians, Benedictines and Canons Regular of Saint Augustine in the twelfth century brought the reorganisation of some surviving Irish monasteries within the new system. The transition was not always an easy one, and some of the French Cistercians who came to set up Mellifont were dissatisfied with the Irish approach to monastic life and went home again, while in Gaul the Canons Regular introduced by Saint Malachy were driven out by their former superior, the son of the abbot of Moville, aided by the king and princes of the Ulaidh and allowed to bring nothing with them but the clothes they wore. Yet despite occasional friction of this kind the transition was effected smoothly enough on the whole. Of the new orders introduced in the twelfth century it was noticeable that the Irish took most warmly to the Cistercians, who in the severity of their rule and the simplicity of their lives must have approximated most closely to the earlier forms of Irish monasticism. In the re-organisation, too, most of the great monasteries — Armagh, Clonmacnois, Clonfert, Lismore, Kildare, Tuam, Cork, Cloyne etc.—became new episcopal sees.

Thus passed away, with no regrets, it would seem, on the part of contemporary churchmen, what had formerly been one of the great glories of the Irish Church.

Yet Irish tradition dies hard, and an institution which had taken centuries to build up did not disappear overnight. In the part of the country which came least under Norman influence, the world of coarbs and erenaghs lived on until the seventeenth century, no longer as heads of monasteries but as hereditary proprietors of the churchlands where their ancestors had formerly ruled. Some of the early monastic treasures like the Shrine of Saint Manachan and the Cross of Clones remained in possession of hereditary keepers until the last century. The Bell of Saint Patrick and its eleventh-century shrine, commissioned by one of the lay-abbots of Armagh, was brought safely through the era of the Penal Laws by the same family which had guarded it centuries earlier. When Maynooth College was founded in 1795 its first librarian was a priest who bore for the last time the proud title of Abbot of Bangor. An abbot of Cong was still being appointed in the nineteenth century. In such anachronisms from the monastic past, but more especially in the architecture, sculpture, metalwork and manuscript illumination which have survived till our own days a great part of the legacy of the Irish monks has proved enduring. As long as men find beauty and inspiration in the Cross of the Scriptures at Clonmacnois, the symbols of the evangelists in the *Book of Armagh*, the poem on *Pangur Ban* or the “*Irish Door*” of Regensburg, they cannot entirely forget the “little monasteries”, as Frank O'Connor called them, where it all began.



Early Irish Spirituality

by

DIARMUID Ó LAOGHAIRE, S.J.

THE word 'spirituality' is used in so many ways today, 'the spirituality of work' for instance, that I thought it wise to look for some precision in the use of the word. In the issue of the international review *Concilium*, devoted to *Spirituality* (November 1965) I read in an article translated from the German that the word 'may be approximately defined as that basic practical or existential attitude of man which is the consequence and expression of the way in which he understands his religious—or more generally, his ethically committed—existence' (p. 5). Further on (p. 28), in an article from the French we may read, 'Christian spirituality does not hold the pseudo-scientific and altogether extravagant prejudice that the knowledge of objects polarizing the religious conscience must be basically foreign to the latter's knowledge.' A little overawed and discouraged by the complexities of the matter as dealt with by various writers in

the review, I decided to ask the reader of this present article to be content with an effort to describe the particular colouring the Irish before the Normans gave to the Gospel of Christ, the expression of that Gospel in Irish terms and under Irish conditions.

The pre-Norman Christian period in Ireland is a long one, more than seven centuries. How long it was may come home to us when we consider the centuries that stretch from the thirteenth century to our own day, yet when we today read Irish literature or see Irish art of that early period, unless we are practised, it all seems the same to us, the same language, old Irish, the same early Christian art. Indeed, despite the fact that the disorder caused by the Norsemen for over two centuries brought about certain changes in religion, art and the development of the Irish language, it is true to say that a general homogenous pattern of Irish life and

religious practice persisted throughout that long period.

The strength and homogeneity of that society is shown in its ability to assimilate to itself outside influences and trends in religion, literature and art and so enrich its own heritage. Again, such was the strength of that Christian society in its various aspects that it could influence strongly and permanently those that came in contact with it, whether within or without Ireland. Research on the Continent and in Britain continues to show how deep that influence was in the matter of Scripture, popular spirituality, art. Today, more fully than before, is being realised the significance of contemporary comment on Irish influence, such as the statement of Alcuin, the great Anglo-Saxon master at the court of Charlemagne, 'the most cultured Irish teachers who so notably advanced the cause of the Church of Christ in Britain, in Gaul and in Italy' (*Monumenta Germaniae Historica*, Epistol. IV, 437) or of Ermenrich of Ellwangen (+ 874), '(Ireland) whence such brilliant luminaries have come to us. Dispensing philosophy and knowledge to great and small, Ireland has filled the Church with her doctrine and learning' (*Monum. Germ. Hist.* 575). The great English saint and doctor of the Church, the Venerable Bede of Yarrow, wrote in his *Ecclesiastical History* in the early eighth century of the influence exercised in Ireland itself:

Many of the nobility and of the lower ranks of the English nation were there at that time (mid-seventh century) who in the days of the Bishops Finan and Colman, forsaking their native island, retired thither (i.e. to Ireland), either for the sake of sacred studies or of a more ascetic life; and some of them presently gave themselves faithfully to a monastic life, others chose rather to apply themselves to study, going about from one master's cell to another. The Scots (i.e. the Irish) willingly received them all and

took care to supply them with daily food, without cost, as also to furnish them with books for their studies and teaching free of charge (Book iii. 27, *Ed. A. M. Sellar*. p. 204).

In that short passage from a reliable external witness we already have some hint of the spirituality of the Irish of those early days. We gather that 'a more ascetic' life could be led there than perhaps in many places in England. When we think of the 'Golden Age' of Ireland, I suppose we immediately think of the practice of asceticism, that is, of external asceticism or bodily penance. Rightly so, but as we shall see, there was more to it than that. We are given to understand too that these visitors from England were layfolk, of whom some became monks. It is a point to remember that many who were called monks in Ireland were laymen, and, notably, also 'of the lower ranks', having no vows of religion. The monastery in the rural communities of those days formed a natural centre and the spiritual life of the people, whether they were of the 'family' of the monastery or not, must have been greatly influenced by the monastic life. However, we will refer to that again. Lastly, we note in this passage from Bede the outstanding hospitality of the Irish, a characteristic we may say of their spirituality.

It is right that we should judge any spirituality by its highest manifestations. It is good, too, where possible to call on outside witnesses. Here again we may invoke Bede:

We know for certain concerning him (Colum Cille) that he left successors renowned for their continence, their love of God and observance of monastic rules . . . they earnestly practised such works of piety and chastity as they could learn from the Prophets, the Gospels and the Apostolic writings (Book iii. 4, *Sellar* p. 143).

The only fault Bede found with the holy

men from Ireland was their attachment to the ancient date for Easter, but, he says (*ibid.*), because they had not failed in the grace of fervent charity, they were accounted worthy to receive the full knowledge of this matter (i.e. the date of the Easter celebration), according to the promise of the Apostle: and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded God shall reveal even this unto you.

His words on Saint Aidan whom he so venerated are worth quoting and very much *ad rem* here:

From this island, then (Iona), and the fraternity of these monks, Aidan was sent to instruct the English nation in Christ, having received the dignity of a bishop . . . Among other lessons in holy living, Aidan left the clergy a most salutary example of abstinence and continence; it was the highest commendation of his doctrine with all men that he taught nothing that he did not practise in his life amongst his brethren; for he neither sought nor loved anything of this world, but delighted in distributing immediately among the poor whom he met whatsoever was given him by the kings or rich men of the world. He was wont to traverse both town and country on foot, never on horseback, unless compelled by some urgent necessity; to the end that as he went, he might turn aside to any whomsoever he saw, whether rich or poor and call upon them, if infidels, to receive the mystery of the faith, or if they were believers, strengthen them in the faith and stir them up by words and actions to giving of alms and the performance of good works. His course of life was so different from the slothfulness of our times that all those who bore him company, whether they were tonsured or laymen, had to study either reading the Scriptures or learning psalms. This was the daily employment of himself and all that were with him, wheresoever they went, and if it

happened, which was but seldom, that he was invited to the king's table, he went with one or two clerks, and having taken a little food, made haste to be gone, either to read with his brethren or to pray. At that time many religious men and women led by his example adopted the custom of prolonging their fast on Wednesdays and Fridays till the ninth hour throughout the year, except during the fifty days after Easter. Never, through fear or respect of persons, did he keep silence with regard to the sins of the rich; but he was wont to correct them with a severe rebuke. He never gave money to the powerful men of the world, but only food, if he happened to entertain them; and on the contrary, whatsoever gifts of money he received from the rich, he either distributed, as has been said, for the use of the poor, or bestowed in ransoming such as had been wrongfully sold for slaves. Moreover, he afterwards made many of those he had ransomed his disciples and after having taught and instructed them advanced them to priest's orders. (Book iii. 5. Sellar p. 144-5).

Elsewhere Bede speaks again of Aidan's

love of peace and charity; of continence and humility; his mind superior to anger and avarice and despising pride and vainglory; his industry in keeping and teaching the divine commandments, his power of study and keeping vigil; his priestly authority in reproving the haughty and powerful and at the same time his tenderness in comforting the afflicted and relieving or defending the poor. To be brief, so far as I have learned from those that knew him, he took care to neglect none of those things which he found in the Gospels and the writings of Apostles and Prophets, but to the utmost of his power endeavoured to fulfil them in all his deeds (Book iii. 17. Sellar p. 170-1).

Bede speaks with the same nostalgia of the Irish who followed Saint Aidan in Lindisfarne, notably Saint Colman,¹ who had resigned the bishopric of Lindisfarne and left with English and Irish followers for Iona and finally Inis Bó Finne (Inishbofin):

... there were few houses besides the churches found at their departure; indeed, no more than were barely sufficient to make civilised life possible; they also had no money, but only cattle; for if they received any money from rich persons, they immediately gave it to the poor, there being no need to gather money or to provide houses for the entertainment of the great men of the world, for such men never resorted to the church except to pray and hear the word of God . . . The whole care of those teachers was to serve God, not the world, to feed the soul and not the belly . . . they were so purified from all taint of avarice that none of them received lands and possessions for building monasteries, unless they were compelled to do so by the temporal authorities (Book iii. 26. Sellar p. 202-3).

If we were asked what was the outstanding characteristic of that early Irish Christianity, we might answer, 'Asceticism' in the sense of external penance. Likewise many would say the same of Matt Talbot. That would be to give a rather superficial judgment. 'Earnestness' would be a better answer, and that quality itself must spring from the conviction of Faith, which again lives only through charity. The opening verse of Broccán's hymn on Saint Brigid expresses the general attitude of that period:

Ní car Brigit buadach bith,
síasair suide eoin i n-ail:
contuil cotlud cimmeda
ind nóeb ar écnairc a mmaicc.

(Victorious Brigit loved not the world, she sat as a bird perched on a cliff: the saint slept a captive's sleep for the sake of her Son) (*Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* ii. 327). In the ninth century (or late eighth) *Féilire*

Oengusso, Calendar of Oengus, we read in verse 145:

Is bréc bríg in domain
do chách dia mbí baile;
iss í in bríg uile
sercc mór do Mac Maire.

(Ed. Whitley Stokes).

(This world is but a lie for all who dwell therein; the reality is to give great love to the Son of Mary).

I think all the evidence goes to show that this detachment from the world was not a negative thing, but the reverse side of the love of Christ, as mentioned in the above verses. Penance was not for the sake of penance, nor fasting for the sake of fasting or to be seen by others. There may have been individuals who failed in these things, but those we read of were very much in earnest, perhaps on occasion indiscreetly so. The highest point of asceticism, voluntary exile or pilgrimage, is explicitly stated to be 'for the love of God,' 'for the love of Christ,' 'for the eternal fatherland' etc., Sincerity of heart was insisted on. Well-known is the quatrain:

Teicht do Róim:
mór saído, becc torbai!
in Rí chon-daigi hi foss,
mani-m-bera latt, ní-fogbai.

(To come to Rome, much labour, little profit! the King whom thou seekest here, unless thou bring him with thee, thou findest him not) (*Thes. Pal.* 206). Incidentally there is an echo of this quatrain in the glosses in the *Liber Hymnorum* on Broccán's hymn on Saint Brigit. The seven men whom the saint had sent to Rome to learn the Rule of Peter and Paul had forgotten it by the time they returned. Said Brigit, 'Rofitir Mac na hIngene, ní mór uar tarba, cid mór for saethar' (The Virgin's Son knows, your profit is not great, though your labour be great) (*Thes. Pal.* ii. 328-9).

If we judge their love of God by the asceticism they willingly undertook for him, then many of the ancient Irish had indeed a great love for him. We must

insist on that motive. Otherwise, what was really the folly of the Cross, will seem to be merely foolishness or perversion. In our day we read of a like expression of the love of God: 'I dtaobh an tseana-dhream fadó . . . cuid acu ar na clárachaibh chodaidís, fiú an sop tuí ní fhágfaidís fúthu é le grá do Dhia. Do bhí fear in paróiste na Rinne thugaidís Níoclás Catháin air, a dhéanadh an obair sin i rith an Charghais ar fad . . .' (*Sean-Chaint na nDéise* 1906, p. 261). (About the old people long ago . . . some of them would sleep on boards, without even a wisp of straw under them, through love of God. There was a man in the parish of Ring called Níoclás Catháin who used to do that throughout the whole of Lent).

That motive of personal love for Christ is always stressed. It is prominent in the famous homily preserved in Cambrai, the most ancient specimen of continuous prose we possess: Here are the relevant passages in translation:

This is the word which our Lord Jesus saith to every one of the race of men, that he banish from him his vices and his sins and that he gather virtues and receive stigmata and signs of the Cross for Christ's sake, so long as he is in power of body and soul, that he follow the tracks of our Lord in good thoughts. Therefore he says: *Si quis uult post me uenire abneget semetipsum* (If anyone will follow me let him deny himself) *et tollat crucem suam*, and let him take up his cross, *et sequatur me*, and let him follow me. This is our denial of ourselves, if we do not indulge our desires and if we abjure our sins. This is our taking-up of our cross upon us, if we receive loss and martyrdom and suffering for Christ's sake, as some one says it . . .

A little further on occurs the famous passage on the three kinds of martyrdom:

This is the white martyrdom to man, when he separates for sake of God from everything he loves, although he suffer fasting or labour thereat.

This is the green martyrdom to him, when by means of them (fasting and labour) he separates from his desires, or suffers toil in penance and repentance.

This is the red martyrdom to him, endurance of a cross or destruction for Christ's sake, as has happened to the apostles in the persecution of the wicked and in teaching the law of God.

These three kinds of martyrdom are comprised in the carnal ones who resort to good repentance, who separate from their desires, who pour forth their blood in fasting and in labour for Christ's sake (*Thes. Pal. ii. 244-7*).

'Ar Dhia, ar Chríost,' for God's sake, for Christ's sake. The words are like a refrain in early Irish literature. This surely explains the great attraction such austere men as the great Columbanus could exercise not only on their own countrymen but on many others in Britain and on the Continent. It was indeed said of Columbanus that he was 'tender in his austerity and austere in his tenderness.'

Christ was near to these early Christians and naturally, we might say, they attracted others to be imitators of themselves as they were of Christ. Nothing is more charming than the intimate way Christ is spoken of in the early literature, and not only Christ but his Mother and consequently all those who have part with them in the Body of Christ, in the Communion of Saints. Interesting it is to go through any anthology of old Irish poetry and note that intimacy or desire of intimacy with Christ and his holy ones. We may record a few typical examples:

A Dé dúilig, atat-teoch:
is tú mo rúinid co rath;
rimsa ní ro shoa do dreich,
úair is tú mo breith cen brath,

Is tú mo rí; is tú mo recht;
is let mo chrí, is let mo chorp;
not-charaim, a Chríst cen chacht,
úair is lat m'anaim in-nocht.

Ní béo 'cá díchleith, a Rí:
ro béo it ríghreib frim ré;
do-roimliur in fleid dot méis;
ním-fhargba dott éis, a Dé.

(O God, lord of creation, I invoke thee. Thou art my gracious counsellor. Mayest thou not turn thy face against me, for thou art my judgement without betrayal.

Thou art my king. Thou art my law. My flesh, my body are thine. I love thee, blessed Christ, for my soul is thine tonight. Let me not hide it, O King: may I be in thy royal dwelling throughout my existence; may I eat the banquet from thy table; leave me not behind thee, O God) (Airbertach mac Cosse Dobráin, A.D. 982 in *Early Irish Lyrics*, ed. Gerard Murphy, p. 36-7). There is another beautiful poem from the same period, the end of the tenth century, although it is the language alone that dates it. The sentiments could be those of a poet in any century from the fifth century on in Ireland—I will not set a limit, even the twentieth century! Surprising affinities with even ancient times can turn up in our Irish prayers. This poem is a prayer for forgiveness which is found as a continuation of the one hundred and fifty poems, totalling 7,800 lines which make up *Saltair na Rann*, a work on the Old Testament and the life of Christ. This poem is full of the corporative spirit so strong in true Irish Christianity. I mean 'corporative' in the fullest and truest sense, the Body of Christ which is his Church spanning all time through the divine life of Christ. In this poem we have that loving nearness to Christ of which we have spoken, we have the sinner's family feeling for all the various members of the Christian family with Our Lady not in isolated splendour, but in her true place in the family and surrounded, interestingly, first of all by holy virgins and 'the assemblage of the distinguished laywomen'. It is the sinner's confession before the merciful Father and all Christians:

Isam aithrech (fébda fecht),
a Choimdiu, dom thairimthecht:
dílig dam cach cin rom-thé,
a Chríst, ar do thrócaire.

Ar do thitacht cain i crí,
ar do gein, a mo Nóebrí,
ar do baithis mbúain i fus,
dílig dam cech n-immarbus.

Ar do chrochad co léire,
ó marbaib ar th'eisérge,
tabir dam dílgud mo thal,
ar it Fíadu fíthrócar.

Ar buidin na fátha fír,
ar drong molbthach na mairtír,
dílig dam cach cin rom-gab
ar fhairinn na n-úasalathar.

Ar chlér na n-apstal cen chol,
ar shluagh na n-úag ndeiscipol,
ar cach nóeb co rath rígdá
dílig dam mo mígníma.

Ar cech nóebúraig ós bith bras,
ar bantracht na prímlaíchas,
dílig dam cach cin fo nim
ar Maire n-amra nIngin.

Ar muintir talman (torm ndil),
ar muintir nime nóebgil,
tabair dílgud bas dech
dom chintaib úair 'sam aithrech.

(I am repentant, Lord, for my transgression, as is right: Christ, of thy mercy, forgive me every sin that may be attributed to me. For thy kind coming into a body, for thy birth, my blessed King, for thy lasting baptism in this world, forgive my every fault.

For thy devoted crucifixion, for thy resurrection from the dead, grant me pardon of my passions, for thou art a truly merciful Lord.

For the gathering of the true prophets, for the praiseworthy band of the martyrs,

forgive me every sin that has mastered me for the assembly of the patriarchs.

For the company of the sinless apostles, for the host of the chaste disciples, for every saint blessed with kingly grace forgive my ill deeds.

For every holy virgin on the great earth, for the assemblage of the distinguished laywomen, forgive me every sin beneath Heaven for wondrous Maiden Mary.

For those who dwell on earth (beloved utterance), for those who dwell in blessed bright Heaven, grant me fullest forgiveness of my sins because I am repentant) (*Early Ir. Lyrics*, 36-9).

We may quote at random a few more of those intimate ways of addressing Christ (which, incidentally, are still common, sometimes in the very words used a thousand years ago or more): '... a Chríst choím chertgenmnaid' (O beloved truly chaste Christ—*Early Ir. Lyrics*, 42-3); 'A Chríst mo chride' (O Christ of my heart—*ib.* 44-5—in the same poem we have 'A Athair inmain'—Beloved Father); '... a meic dil Dé' (dear Son of God—*ib.* 54-5); 'A Coimdiu baíd ... a Athair inmain' (Beloved Lord ... dear Father—*ib.* 58-9); 'A mo dile, a Dé' (O my love, my God—*ib.* 64-5); 'A Athair cacha baíde' (O Father of all affection—*ib.* *ib.*); 'a Chríst cain' (good Christ—*ib.* 140-1). Common too was the title, 'Ísucán', little, dear Jesus. The old Irish Church had, then, a deep realisation of the Church as the Body of Christ with all that follows from that, the part of Our Lady² in our salvation, the love due to the neighbour. The idea of the Church, even the physical church, as a mother was a commonplace, that is, it is she that gives birth to us in Christ through the sacrament of baptism or, to put it in another way, we are born in the womb of the Church or Christ is born in us. So we may come across striking, if not startling, modes of speech. Thus we read, 'Ca mac caitheas corp a athar a mbroind a máthar? Corp in Coimhdhedh caithes in sagart annsin

eclais naoim.' (What son consumes his father's body in his mother's womb? The Body of the Lord that the priest consumes in holy Church). The answer is unusual grammatically as well as for its vividness. In the life of Saint Colmán Eala we read:

An uair gabhus tú do tratha
is bias tú i mbroinn do mathar,
gabh lat iad go mall don dáil

más áil a ttarbha d'fagail (*Bethada Náem nErenn*, ed. C. Plummer, *Betha Colmán E.* I. par. 170) (When you recite your hours and will be in your mother's womb i.e. the church, recite them slowly to the assembly if you wish to get the benefit of them). And in the life of Saint Brendan we are told that the saint came to the door of a church which had three iron locks: 'Sinis B. a laimh iarsin dona dibh com-ladhaibh agus isedh asbert: Osslaicc remhainn, a mathair Crist .i. a Ecclas' (*op. cit. Betha B.* par. 169) (B. stretched out his hand then to the two valves and said: Open to us, O Mother of Christ i.e. O Church).

In the glosses from the seventh or eighth centuries on the epistles of Saint Paul we have frequent reference to the faithful as the Body of Christ. On I Cor. 8, 12. 'Thus sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak' we have the gloss: 'hóre rombebe Crist dar cenn ind óesa lobuir *et* it boill do Crist iarum, int immormus dognither friusom is fri Crist dognither (since Christ has died for the sake of the feeble folk and they, then, are members of Christ's, the sin that is committed against them, is committed against Christ). On I Cor. 12, 12 '... all the members of the body ...' we have 'Cosmulius trā anísiu lessom .i. amal fongní cach ball di alailiu isin chorp, arafogna talland cáich uanni di alailiu ar ammi óinchorp hí Crist' (This, then, is a simile of his, that is: as every member serves the other in the body, that the talent of every one of us should serve the other, for we are one body in Christ).

This clear perception of our oneness in the Church which is the Body of Christ led to the stressing of many things that strengthen that unity and the shunning of things that weaken it. So we read:

Fail a trí

danab buidech Mac Dé bí,

oenta bráthar, comrád cert

altóir Dé do thimthrecht (*Ed. K. Meyer, Inisleabhar na Gaedhilge VII, 116*).

(Three things that give delight to the Son of the living God, brothers in unity, seemingly conversation, the serving of God's altar). In the life of Saint Brendan already quoted we have (par. 30): 'Ocus ar ndol dochum an oilein duinn tangattar na braithre chucainn as a selladhaibh amach amail saithe beach; ocus ger scaílte ind aittrebh sin, doba nemhscaoilte a cconuersaid ocus a ccoccús ocus a ngradh' (And when we came to the island the brothers came to us out of their cells like a swarm of bees; and although their dwellings were divided from one another, there was no division in their converse or counsel or affection). In the Rule of Saint Ailbhe, which like the other ancient Rules is more like a series of counsels on the love of God and the neighbour than precise rules, we have:

Is Dia usal a n-Athair,

is Ecclais Nóib a máthair;

níp umaldóit for bréthir,

aírchised cách a bráthair.

(Their Father is noble God, their mother is Holy Church; let it not be mouth-humility, let each have compassion on his brother) (*Ed. and trans. J. O'Neill, Ériu III, 102-3*). In *Riagul na Manach Liath* (The Rule of the Grey Monks) we have the verse:

Clogán bind

ina cothraim os nach glind;

is i toil ar Fiadhad find

uathad brathar fo aen cuing.

(*Ed. J. Strachan, Ériu II, 229*).

(A sweet-sounding little bell poised above a glen; it is the will of our bright Lord—a small band of brothers under one yoke).

In another *Rule* we have:

It é do theoir riagla—

nítroib anaill bas diliu,

ainmne ocus umaldóit,

serc in Coimded it-chridiu.

(Your three rules are—may nothing else be dearer to you, patience, humility, love of the Lord in your heart), (*Ed. and trans. J. Strachan, Ériu I, 194*). In the life of Colmán mac Lúacháin we have the advice:

Crommatt cind fon Eclais n-uill

mad áil doib rath Spiraitt Glain

(Let them bow their heads under the great Church if they desire the grace of the Holy Ghost) (*Ed. and trans. K. Meyer, p. 98-9*).

Such was the reverence for Rome as the centre of the Church on earth that, as we are told, soil from the graves of Saints Peter and Paul was brought back to spread in Irish graveyards. The life just mentioned contains a number of references to the custom and it is also mentioned in the life of Saint Kevin. It has been pointed out also that that same reverence, apart from a possible conservatism, would account for the Irish clinging for so long to the old (Roman) method of determining the date of Easter. The word *Rómh* itself came to be a common noun in Irish standing for the burial place of a saint and later for any burial place.

Granted that there was such a great awareness of the unity of Christians in Christ it is hardly necessary to stress the place of the Mass. A few references will suffice. In the Rule of Saint Mochuda we have:

Aifrind for na Cristaidib

ocus for cech ngrad,

Aifrind for na fochaidib

otha min co (a) már. (*Ed. K. Meyer, Archiv für Celtische Lexikographie III, 319*).

(Masses for Christians and for all those in orders, Masses for the afflicted from the least to the greatest). From the same *Rule*:

In tan tiastar don aifrind

is usal in dán,

congain cride, telcud dér,

turcabál na lám. (*Ib.*)

(When one goes to Mass, noble the occupation, contrition of heart, shedding of tears, raising of hands). Among the things customary in the school of Óc-Shinchell in Cill Achaidh was, we are told, 'sanntugadh Oifrin'—eagerness for Mass.

We have already referred to Our Lady's accepted place in the work of salvation. This is stressed in the beautiful poems addressed to her in the later old period. One would like to quote them in full, notably the poems of Blathmhac edited by Professor James Carney, for their tenderness and for their showing in such a living and orthodox way Our Lady's noble part in the work of her son on behalf of us all. We must, at the risk of only giving a partial idea of that, give one or two quotations. This poem is from the eleventh century and like many another good poem is ascribed to Saint Colum Cille:

A Maire mín, maithingen,
tabair fortacht dún,
a chriol cuirp choimdetá,
a chomrair na rún.

A thrócar, a dílgedach,
co rath Spirta glain,
guid linn in Ríg fírbrethach
donchlainn chumra chain.

A máthair na fírinne,
ro chinnis for cách;
guid lemsa do phríngine,
dom sháerad i mbráth.

(Gentle Mary, good maiden, give us help, thou casket of the Lord's body and shrine of all mysteries.

Merciful forgiving one who hast the grace of the Holy Ghost, join us in entreating the just-judging King on behalf of his fair fragrant children.

Mother of truth, thou hast excelled every-one; pray with me to thy Firstborn that he save me at Judgment) (*Early Ir. Lyrics*, 46-8). The last lines above remind one of the fine invocation in the litany in the

Leabhar Breac attributed to Mughrón (+980), successor of Colum Cille: 'A Meic rogenair fo dí—O Son who was born twice.

In the Latin poem composed by Cúchuimne, probably a monk in Iona, in the early eighth century we find Our Lady's part in the work of redemption expressed beautifully and briefly:

Per mulierem et lignum Mundus prius
periit,
per mulieris virtutem ad salutem rediit.
Maria mater miranda patrem suum
edidit,
per quem aqua late lotus totus mundus
credidit.

(By a woman and a tree the world of old perished; by the virtue of a woman it returned to health—or salvation.

Mary, wondrous mother, brought forth her Father, by whom the whole world, plentifully cleansed, believed). The favourite title given to Christ, 'Mac Muire,' Son of Mary, could sum up for us the mariology of the Irish.

We mentioned earlier that earnestness might be regarded as the outstanding characteristic of those early Irish Christians. They were very earnest in their efforts to root out sin. They had no illusions about the weakness of their nature. It is generally accepted that to the Irish was due the spreading of the custom of private, and therefore more frequent, confession. Saint Molua is reported as saying, 'Sicut enim pavementum scopha cotidie teritur, ita anima cotidiana confessione' (*Vitae Sanctorum Hiberniae*, ed. C. Plummer, S. Molua xxx)—For as the floor is swept daily by the brush, so the soul by daily confession. Great store was set on the 'anamchara,' the soul-friend, and on 'anamchairdeas,' spiritual direction—and how beautiful the expressions are, compared to the impersonal 'spiritual director, spiritual direction'! We are told that Saint Brigid explained the

phenomenon of a young man running by without his head, by the words 'Coland cen chend duine cen anmcharait,' a person without a soul-friend (as was the young man) is as a body without a head. The expression referred to all Christians of whatever state in life.

No principle was more wholeheartedly accepted in the spiritual life than *Contraria contrariis*, vices are to be overcome by the contrary virtues. Many are the tracts illustrating the principle.

Monks and lay people in a society where there were no towns appear to have lived in close contact, what with all the lay people who would be associated with the work of the monastery. As we gather from Bede's words on Saint Aidan, the spiritual formation of lay people also was monastic and we have frequent reference to children learning the psalms. When we hear also of big numbers in some of the monasteries we are not surprised to hear that not a few sought a more secluded life as hermits, whether in islands, woods or other remote places. The word 'diseart' ('diserth' in Wales) from the Latin 'desertum' still lives in placenames as evidence of those hermitages. Much of the delightfully fresh poetry we still possess we owe to those ancient hermits. Their great purity of life and generosity in serving God seems to have won for them a clear vision of God in his natural creation and to judge by many charming stories, a wonderful power over animals. Perhaps it was a monk who longed for the freedom of the eremitical life who wrote this wistful verse which is in the *Leabhar Breac*:

Ach, a luin, is buide duit,
cáit sa muine a fuil do net;
a díthrebaig nach clind clocc,
as bind bocc síthamail t'fhét.

(Ah, blackbird, thou art contented, wherever in the grove thy nest may be; o hermit that sounds no bell, sweet, soft, peaceful is thy note). (*Ed. and trans. K. Meyer, Irish. na G. iv. 15*).

An impression one gets on studying the various documents of the early Irish Church is that of maturity, shown in wisdom. Of course, before Christianity came, pagan society had reached a fair level of sophistication and maturity, unlike the pagan societies evangelised in modern times in Africa, for example. Still, the Christian wisdom and maturity of early Ireland is remarkable. If there was austerity, there was also, as Doctor Kathleen Hughes points out more than once in her very fine book *The Church in Early Irish Society*, much tolerance and a realization that not all are led the same way by the Holy Spirit. Undoubtedly, when the fervour of the first couple of centuries cooled, the reaction which came with the Céilí Dé, or those who bound themselves, on the pattern of the secular céile or client, to God as their Flaith or Lord, was rather extreme. The tendency for reformers always is to condemn use because of abuse. Yet the good produced by the Céilí Dé outweighed whatever was 'puritannical' in their regime. As for lack of uniformity, which we have just mentioned, consider the wise words in the *Rule of Mochuda or Carthach* (Carthage): 'Different is the condition of everyone, different the nature of the place, different the law by which food is diminished or increased' (Quoted Hughes, *op. cit.* 183). Not all religious orders or congregations of a far later date showed such a wisdom for their members who lived not merely in different parts of the same country and in a common climate, but in different lands under very different conditions of custom and climate. How wise this counsel in the *Rule of Ailbhe*:

Ná bad rothend, ná bad lax,
níp riagol cen fhiss,
ara rucca cách a mám
ná farcaba a liss.

(Let it not be too strict, let it not be lax, let it not be a rule without knowledge, that each may be able to bear his yoke so that he may not leave his enclosure). (*Ed. and*

trans. J. O'Neill, *Ériu* III. 104-5).

One could make an anthology of the many pithy sayings and verses of spiritual wisdom. A few examples here and now may be regarded as typical:

Dia ndernta oeine cech láí

is beith i ndóire do Dia,

is ferr comól risin trúag—

is romór an lúagh rotfia. (*Ed. K. Meyer, Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie* X. 42). (If you were to fast every day and be in slavery to God, better is it to feast—drink—together with the wretched—great will be your reward).

Nocha ceald acht ainm cille

bail nach féigthar firinne;

ni hinadh do Christ na clann

áit i mbi longport latrann. (*Ed. K. Meyer, Id.* XII. 292).

(It is not a church, but only the name of a church, the place where is no regard for truth; it is no place for Christ of the peoples that which is a den of thieves).

Cid maith mellchai nó rebai,

ferr coibsen gela glana;

is cummai ocus ór buide

duine traethas a thalai.

(Though mirth or sport are good, white, pure confessions are better; like yellow gold is the man who spurns his desires). (*Ed. and trans. K. Meyer, Irisl. na G.* IV 133). A gentle understatement!

Fuaras-sa

luss no iccfad in slúag so,

sercc Maic Dé ocus a oman,

miscais don doman trúag so.

(I have found a herb that would heal this host, love of God's Son and his fear, hatred of this wretched world). (*Ed. and trans. K. Meyer, ib.*).

Fuil trí ní

do ná buidech Mac Dé bíí,

crábud úallach, coiscéd serb,

écnach duine mad inderb.

(Three things there are for which the Son of the living God is not grateful, haughty devotion, harsh reproof, reviling a man if it is not certain). (*Ed. and trans. K. Meyer*

ib. 134). From Mochuda's Rule we have the Golden Rule in verse:

A n-adcobrai-siu ó chách

deit féin da cech maith,

déna-su sin da cech óen

ar cu róis in Flaith.

Ní ná dúthairser deit féin

do erchoit bís olc,

do duine ní accobra

céin not-be i corp. (*Ed. K. Meyer, Archiv für Celt, Lexik. III.* 312).

(What thou desirest from each one for thyself of every good, do thou that to every one so that thou mayest come to the Lord—or Kingdom.

What thou dost not desire to thyself of harm which is evil, thou shouldst not desire it to any person as long as you live).

Maircc neoch cheiseas ar a chuid,

maith in rannadoir Mac Dé;

is duillech in coill utt tall—

robo lom a barr ané. (Attributed to Colum Cille, but from a much later period —*Ed. K. Meyer, Zeitschrift für Celtische Philologie. VII* 303).

(Woe to him who complains of his lot, The Son of God is a good distributor; leafy is yonder wood, bare was its top yesterday).

A Dé bí,

maircc do-ní deirbéile im ní;

dogeibh duine ní nach faic,

téitt as a glaic in ní atchí. (*Ib.*)

(O living God, woe to him who bemoans a thing; a person gets a thing unseen to him, the thing he sees vanishes from his grasp).

Coroin do chur isi cenn

munba deóin le Rígh na renn,

bia in t-anum co hainmech de

munbo cairnech in craidhe. (*Ed. K.*

Meyer, Id. VI. 268).

(To tonsure the head unless it be the will of the King of stars, the soul will be disfigured by it unless the heart be tonsured).

Cid is nesa do Dia? Ní hansa. In tí nonnimráidhinn co menicc.

Cid dian congnamaidh Dia? Don tí dogni maith.

Cid i n-aitrebann Dia? Isin tí bis gin peccoth. (Ed. K. Meyer, *Id.* IV. 234).

(Who is nearest to God? Not difficult. He who meditates often on Him.

To whom is God a helper? To him who does good.

In whom does God dwell? In him who is without sin).

Da áit ind léime .i. ait ard agus áit íseal. Ait ard dia legar nech i n-iffirn .i. in dímus; áit ísil dia legar nech i nim .i. in umalóit (*ib.*) (The two places of the leap, i.e. the high place and the low place. The high place from which one is released into hell, i.e. pride; the low place from which one is let into heaven, i.e. humility).

Ach cer thinn a fulachtadh
tucad er chnes Meic Mhuire,
tinne leis a dubhachus
do bhí uirraidh-si uime.

(Ah, though sore the suffering that was put on the body of the Son of Mary, sorer to him the woe that was on her for his sake). (Ed. and trans. K. Meyer, *Irisl. na G. IV* 134)

Impossible to give a full view of early Irish Spirituality in these few pages. I regret that I have barely mentioned the Scriptures which were held in such high reverence. Consider that that most beautiful of our treasures, the Book of Kells, was inspired by love of the Scriptures as a shrine for them. To be learned was above all to be learned in the Scriptures. In a poem from the ninth or tenth century we are told of five fasts that are displeasing to God, and one of them is 'oéine re foghlúim n-egna/ocus re túr na screptra'—fasting from wise learning and from searching the Scriptures (Ed. and trans. B. Ó Cuív *Ériu* XIX. 8). In the twelfth century Book of Leinster there is a list of Irish saints with a corresponding list of apostles, Our Lady, Job and saints who were considered to be of one way of temperament and life. The Irish had a great devotion to Saint Patrick and their own saints, but they had also a

deep veneration for the holy and learned ones of the universal Church.

The subject we have only touched on here and there, but enough perhaps to show us that Saint Aidan and the other Irish described so lovingly by Bede reflected truly the spirituality of their countrymen, a spirituality, as Bede tells us, based on 'the Gospels and the writings of Apostles and Prophets,' and given an unmistakably Irish flavour. It was a thorough and earnest seeking of God through Christ and in the Church of Christ. In all this the Irish lost none of their characteristics of irony or humour. To comment on that last point would require another study.

We might conclude (but not complete) our remarks by proposing one of the *Loricæ* or Breastplate prayers, a type of prayer which seems to have originated in Ireland. Some of these could later degenerate into what seem to be more like charms than prayers, but this example, attributed to Saint Fursa sums up for us, I think, that wholeheartedness and all-inclusiveness of early Irish religion, based on intimacy with the Persons of the Blessed Trinity and on love and service of them through love and service of the neighbour:

Robé mainrehta De forsind fhormna-sa,
robé torruma in Spirta Naoimh for in
cend-sa,
robé airde Crist isin edan-sa,
robé ésdecht in Spirta Naimh isna
cluasaib-sea,
robé bolttanugud an Spirta Noib isna
sronaib-sea,
robé imfhaiccsin fer nime isna suilib-sea,
robé comlabra fer nime isna belaib-sea,
robé lubair Eculsa De isna lamaib-sea,
robé les De agus an choimnesa isna
cosaib-sea,

Roba loc do Dia in cride-sea,

rob la Dia Athair uile in duine-sea!
(Ed. K. Meyer, *Archiv für Celt. Lexik.* III. 232).

(May the yoke of the Law of God be on this shoulder,

the coming of the Holy Spirit on this head,
the sign of Christ on this forehead,
the hearing of the Holy Spirit in these ears,
the smelling of the Holy Spirit in this nose,
the vision that the people of Heaven have
in these eyes,
the speech of the people of Heaven in this
mouth,

the work of the Church of God in these
hands,
the good of God and of the neighbour in
these feet.

May God be dwelling in this heart
and this man belong entirely to God the
Father!) (Trans. P. de Hindeberg, S.J.).

FOOTNOTES

1 For a very readable account of Saints Aidan and Colman see *A Procession of Saints* by Father James Broderick S.J.

2 This does not appear before the 8th century as far as our evidence goes, but by that time appears to be well-developed. See further on in text.



From the seventh to the ninth century Irish monks often undertook journeys of voluntary penitential exile which carried them far away from home to the Continent. In many centres across the vast area of Northern Europe they took upon themselves the work of re-christianizing peoples whose faith and culture had disintegrated with the crumbling structure of imperial Rome. So extensive was their achievement that it would not be possible to give an adequate account of it all in a single article. We are fortunate to have an account by an eminent Irish historian of the evangelical and cultural impact made by Irish missionaries in one area; it can be taken as typical of Ireland's magnificent contribution towards rebuilding Christian Europe.

Early Irish-German Associations

By

JOHN RYAN, S.J.

IRELAND and Germany have never been next-door neighbours and that perhaps is why they have always got on well together! Certain it is that history in its long unbroken chain of chapters does not record even one quarrel between the two nations. At this point the captious critic may interpose an objection, "What about the Celts?" he may say: "I had to read a book of Caesar in my school days and if my memory serves me right Caesar spoke of the Celts and Germans as natural and indeed inveterate enemies. Are not the Irish Celts? And is it, therefore, right to say that relations between the Irish and the

Germans have always been peaceful?" The answer is, "Yes"; the original statement holds good, and for a twofold reason. First of all, the Irish Celts had settled in Ireland centuries before the period of which Caesar was treating. His testimony thus does not apply to them. Secondly, it is worthy of notice that if the Celts and Germans of Caesar's day were often enough disputing with one another along the hundreds of miles of their common frontier, they were both much closer to each other in civilization than was either nation to the Romans, for some extremely important features of their social and political

organization were, if not exactly the same, at least very much alike.

For both, the foundation of the body politic was the assemblage of free citizens. These were in two grades, the ordinary freemen and the aristocrats. The latter among the Celts are referred to as *equites*, *illustriores*, *noblissimi*, *antiquissima familia nati*, *genus regium*; among the Germans as *nobiles*, *insignis nobilitas*, *regia stirps*, *genus regium*. From these the leaders of the two nations were drawn. The Celts had their *primi*, *principes civitatis*, *reguli*, *reges*, βασιλεῖς; the Germans their *principes*, *proceres*, *primores*, ἡγεμόνες. For both Celts and Germans the political unit was a rural area which the Romans called *pagus*, the Greek writers *φυλή*. It was over such a region that the *princeps*, πρῶτος ἀνὴρ, *rex*, *δυναστής*, ruled. Politically and militarily this unit was self-governed. Such units gathered together into larger confederate states, called by the Romans *civitates*, ruled by superior kings or presidents. Each of these had his council of nobles to help him in the task of government; and his popular assembly, which met at fixed intervals, to make laws and give a final answer in disputed questions. The *civitates* tended again to combine to form states of considerable size. Military alliances often resulted in a powerful army, in which, however, each small state preserved its identity and served immediately under its own officers. All such arrangements were common to the two peoples, Celts and Germans.

Corresponding with the Celtic kings Ambigatus (Bituriges), Luerius (Arverni), Bituitus (Arverni), Diviciacus (Suessiones), Galba (Suessiones and Remi), Caratacos (Trinovantes), we hear of Aroivistus, King of the Suabian Helvetii, Marbod of the Marcomanni, Vangio and Sido and other German rulers. In a word, Celts and Germans in the classical period resembled each other closely in organization and customs. The division into social classes,

the fundamental political unit, the emphasis on the rural countryside, not on town or city; the small autonomous state; the grouping into larger federations; the importance of family connections, with its expression in what is often loosely called the tribe; the prominent position given to elected leaders, princes and kings; the council of nobles and the assembly of the freeborn plebs; the recruitment of troops; the methods of fighting in the field; the popularity of war-songs; the search for military strength through alliances rather than through autocracy; the general aspect and ethos of the kingdom or state; these features are so similar that they postulate a considerable amount of friendly co-operation between the two races. Something, of course, is due to common descent from the parent Indo-Germanic stock from which both peoples sprang, but the range of resemblance between the civilization of the Celts and Germans and the difference between this form of civilization and that of the other Indo-Germanic peoples, Italians, Slavs, Greeks and the rest, is best explained by the mutual interchange of friendly influences over long centuries of time. In other words, the Celts and the Germans, though they did carry their disputes on occasion to the battlefield, lived normally in such neighbourly harmony one with the other that they developed as nations along broadly similar lines.

All this, in a sense, is pre-history. It lies too far back in the past to affect us emotionally today. Documentary Irish history begins about A.D. 400; the history proper of Germany may be said to begin with the *Völkerwanderung*. In the new mediaeval Europe which this great change created, Ireland and Germany were destined to come, here and there, at different times and in different ways, into intimate contact. It is that period of substantial and plenteous mutual fructification in the story of both that I shall now endeavour to sketch.

Though the Burgundians and the western Franks were Germans, it would be pedantry, I think, in view of later developments, to dwell on this fact in the present context. Our interest lies in those lands, some to the west, but mostly to the east of the Rhine whose speech was and is German. Does this mean that no mention may be made of Charlemagne? No; for despite his name his *Life* by Einhard shows that the native tongue of that great monarch was Teutonic, not Romance.

There is no need to dwell on the immense political and social upheaval caused by the *Völkerwanderung*. After the conversion of Constantine to Christianity, the Faith of Christ had made extraordinary progress in all parts of the Empire, to such an extent that there was a temptation, felt even by highly intelligent men, to identify Christianity with the Empire, to assume that if the Empire fell, the Church would be dragged to the depths with it. The early fifth century provided perverse consolation for the pessimists. In the West the Empire, like an engine exhausted in its every part by age, spluttered to an inglorious end. When the smoke of battle lifted, the face of Europe had undergone a startling change. Instead of imperial provinces, ruled by Roman governors, there were new tribal kingdoms ruled by heathen Franks, Burgundians, Angles, Saxons; or by Arian Visigoths, Ostrogoths, Longobards. As in the previous centuries with the pagan Romans, the Church had now to face the herculean task of converting these. In the event, the heathens proved to be more amenable to her influence than the Arians. Gregory of Tours compares the baptism of Chlodovech, King of the Franks, in 496, to the conversion of Constantine, and with some justification, for if the strongest of the new German kingdoms had taken the lead in a ruthless campaign against the Christian Faith the injury done to what remained of European civilization might have been beyond repair. To the passage

of the Franks, then, from paganism to Christianity we may date the beginning of the Middle Ages. To the collaboration of the Franks with the Church we owe that specific form of Christian civilization which we call mediaeval. If it began on a Christmas Day, then the first great period of its development might be said to have ended on another Christmas Day, that of A.D. 800, when Charlemagne was crowned Emperor in St. Peter's by Pope Leo III.

To return for a moment to the sixth century. The collapse of the old and the rise of the new had brought grave mental and moral deterioration. In Gaul the descent was rapid and alarming. Gregory of Tours, though of Roman descent and born about A.D. 538 and Caesarius of Arles, who died in 543 are so different in scholarly attainments that they seem to represent two distinct civilizations. Rome itself had shrunk to the dimensions of a provincial capital. In Spain, Isidore of Sevilla, at the beginning of the seventh century, set himself to collect and transmit to posterity some of the treasures of ancient knowledge. He had diagnosed the position correctly; for centuries to come, Europe would live on the scholarship of the past; there would be no appreciable intellectual progress. Indeed, from the fall of the Empire to the twelfth century there was to appear but one original thinker of eminence, our own Johannes Scottus, better known as Eriugena.

In the reconstruction of Europe during the early mediaeval period, Ireland played an honourable part. While France, Italy and Spain were being conquered by the new peoples Ireland had gone her own way in comparative peace. Her most outstanding characteristic at this time was the incredible popularity of the monastic institute. In Irishmen wanderlust has always been a weakness, almost—it might be argued—a national disease. In God's providence this spirit of enterprise was now to unite itself with missionary zeal and thus conduce to happy and lasting results. Before the sixth

century ended, Saint Colmcille had settled in Iona and Saint Columban had settled in Burgundy, and the great expansion of Irish monasticism was in full swing.

Saint Columban's successful work in Burgundy is a commonplace of mediaeval history. He went thither with some natural advantages. The Irish monks at home stayed always in close contact with the faithful of the vicinity; in fact, in the Irish ecclesiastical system, the monasteries were commonly the parish churches and the monks the parish clergy of the people. Hence, when Saint Columban settled in Burgundy, he was profoundly anxious to render spiritual service to the populace of the neighbourhood. Two other points deserve mention. Ireland, when Saint Columban left it, had entered on a golden age, a happy era, of necessity brief, when the Christian Faith on the one hand and the secular institutions of Celtic civilization, on the other hand, were acting and reacting on each other to the eternal benefit of the nation. Irish culture was at once saintly and scholarly. The influence of Saint Columban in Burgundy was thus in every way elevating. Again, he came from a Celtic country, and the Celts and the Germans, as I explained earlier, did not differ so widely, one from the other, in their institutions. Neither people possessed towns. There were thus no obvious sites for episcopal sees. There was thus again ample room for monasteries, and the likelihood that in German territory, the eyes of the monks would not be turned inward on themselves alone, but outward also on the laity, whom they would seek to instruct and, if possible, to raise to the practice of solid virtue. No wonder then that the Irish and the Burgundians got on well together. The Irish church was a mediaeval church, missionary in its inmost spirit, universal in outlook, openly allied with the state, already accustomed to close intimacy with the secular authorities in the everyday affairs of life. In Ireland the royal power was weak; in Burgundy it was

excessively strong. Saint Columban resented this but failed to succeed in breaking it. But he did insist on the principle that his monasteries should be independent, that they should be able to carry on their salutary work without interference from episcopal or royal power. He and his monks brought to Burgundy two gifts of supreme value, high moral seriousness, the acceptance of God's law without gloss or compromise and emphasis on the need for cultivation of the mind. These are the basic elements in any culture worthy of the name. Through them the influence of Saint Columban was profound and enduring.

It was felt, too, over wide regions, in Alsace, in Switzerland, in Austria, in Italy. Under the impulse from Luxeuil about fifty monasteries were founded.

Only one of these owes its origin to an Irish disciple. He is known to us as Saint Gall, while the town which still bears his name is Sankt Gallen. When Columban was expelled from Luxeuil and sent to Nantes for transportation to Ireland, Gall was one of his companions. When Columban eluded his captors and proceeded eastwards to Bregenz, Gall was in his company, but on the journey from Bregenz to Bobbio in Italy, Gall fell sick of fever, remained behind to recover, took a fancy to the Steinachtal in which he found himself and determined finally to remain there as a hermit. Jonas of Bobbio talked with him there before he began to write his *Life* of Columban. A *Life* of Gall himself appeared more than a hundred years after his death; and further *Lives* were composed by Wetti and Walafrid Strabo in the ninth century and by Notker Balbulus in the tenth century. There is much of legend in all these *Lives* but their main content may well be historical. Thus there is little reason to doubt that Gall worked as a missionary among the Alemanni, his neighbours, and preached to them with effect, because he had learned their language. He cultivated devotion to the holy cross, no doubt as a substitute for

martyrdom, that "green" martyrdom of extreme mortification instead of the "red" martyrdom which he was not called upon to suffer. He was on good terms with the local secular rulers. To another category of narration belongs the report of how he solved his transport problems: a bear that lived up the mountain obliged by carrying down wood felled in the forest near his den, and was rewarded with bottles of beer and loaves made of home-grown wheat (literally "with bread and wine") at the cell door! The death of Saint Gall did not bring to an end the *Galluszele*; it continued to flourish as an eremitical establishment until enlarged by the Alemann Audomar (Otmar) in 720 and transformed into a cenobitic monastery that was soon to rank as one of the great cultural centres of the world. Meanwhile Saint Gall himself was well remembered. His cult spread into Germany, to Hohenzollern, Freiburg, Würzburg and Franconia generally, to the Rhineland, Paderborn, eastern Germany, Bohemia and Alsace.

A skeleton in the cupboard of the Irish Church was that it had so few martyrs. Giraldus Cambrensis was discourteous enough to dwell on this weakness when speaking to the Archbishop of Cashel after the Norman Invasion of 1170. The Archbishop, he relates, admitted that the charge was true, but added that now that the Normans had come (Thomas Becket had just then been murdered in Canterbury) there was every likelihood that the fault would be corrected! Of the early Irish martyrs perhaps the best-known to us is St. Kilian (Celléne) of Würzburg. He was active as a missionary in eastern Franconia and Thuringia (Thüringen). According to the story, he came as a bishop with eleven companions to evangelize this region, and was martyred there with a priest helper, Colman, and a deacon Totnan (or Donanus=Donnán?) about 689. When Würzburg was made the see of a diocese by Saint Boniface, its first bishop, Burchard,

brought the relics of the martyrs to the cathedral. There the three heads remain, while the bodies rest in the crypt, dedicated to Saint Kilian, of the Neumünsterkirche. The Main, still an important river, was in earlier times more important as a highway of communication. Along it the cult of Saint Kilian travelled, eastwards to Bamberg, westwards to the Rhine. When we remember that the great Hungarian pilgrimage to Köln and Aachen, which took place every seven years, proceeded along the Danube to Regensburg and then along the Main to Mainz (the way taken in reverse by the crusaders to Constantinople and Jerusalem) we see how easy it was for the cult to travel farther afield. Northwards, too, it spread to Paderborn and Münster and southwards to Würtemberg and Switzerland, Upper Austria and Steiermark. Nor is this cult a vague and withered record from a dead and forgotten past. In 1952, amid ruins and desolation and tragic memories from the war so recently ended, the twelfth centenary of the removal of Saint Kilian's relics to the cathedral was celebrated with imposing ceremony. Among those present was the Bishop of Kilmore, the Most Reverend Doctor Quinn (an ancient legendary source put the birthplace of the saint in his diocese!) and the Reverend Professor Aubrey Gwynn, S.J. A splendid volume, fittingly entitled *Herbipolis Jubilans* remains as a *monumentum aere perennius* to recall this happy occasion. Between Ireland and Germany Saint Kilian is, and I trust will ever continue to be, a golden link.

To the same seventh century belonged Saint Disibod, who, according to his biographer, the famous mystic, Hildegard, abbess of Rupertsberg, was an Irishman. He settled as an anchorite on the Nahe, near the point where that river flows into the Rhine at Bingen. As in many other cases, the hermitage developed into a monastery, that of Disibodenberg or Disenberg. Another missionary, said to be Irish, was

Saint Alto, founder of the monastery of Altenmünster in Bavaria. To the eighth century belongs Saint Corbinian, bishop of Freising, who was one of the apostles of south Germany. The author of his *Life* regarded him as a Briton, that is to say, a Welshman, but the form of his name is Irish rather than Welsh. It seems to contain the root Corb—, found in Corbmac, Cormac. The fact that the *Life* was written at the request of the Irishman, Vergil of Salzburg, is another indication, for what it is worth, of Corbinian's Irish origin. It may well be, therefore, that Aribo, the biographer, made the mistake, common enough in Continental writers, of regarding all the inhabitants of the so-called British Isles as "British".

The Vergil just mentioned stands much more in the light of history than the missionaries already mentioned. He was probably a Leinsterman, though there is some difficulty in identifying him with the Fergil who was abbot of Achadbó in Leix. This Fergil's successor died in 782, after an exceptionally long period of forty-three years in the abbatial chair. Fergil must thus have resigned in 739. He would not have become abbot before the age of thirty, so that his birth must have taken place at latest, in 709. These dates are in accord with what we know of his career. His death, in 784, is recorded in the Irish Annals, an unusual honour for an Irishman who had spent most of his life abroad. The explanation is suggested by the title, "Geometer"; in other words, he had won renown as a student of what would now in the universities be called geography. Whether his reputation was already made as Abbot of Achadbó or whether it arose for the first time when he went on the Continent, must remain obscure.

Apparently he set out from Ireland as a *peregrinus* about 742. In 743 he met Pippin the Short at Quiercy on the Oise. The Merovingian dynasty still survived but in that pallid and ghostly twilight which

Einhard so vividly describes in his *Life* of Charlemagne. There was a monarch who wore his hair in regal profusion, sat on the throne, received and entertained ambassadors, travelled in state in the royal ox-cart, rejoiced in the trappings of kingship, but possessed, beyond the trappings, nothing. Real power lay exclusively in the hands of the Mayors of the Palace. This pitiful remnant of Merovingian supremacy was soon to end, for Pippin had decided to mount the throne himself as the first Carolingian king.

Saint Boniface, at the request of Duke Odilo of Bavaria, had divided that Duchy into four dioceses. Salzburg was the see of one of these. War broke out between Odilo and Pippin, with disastrous consequences for the former, since his army was defeated and himself taken prisoner and brought to the Frankish court. During his captivity Odilo met Vergil and was obviously impressed by his character and learning. In course of time the Duke was set at liberty and allowed to return to his Bavarian home. It is not improbable that Vergil accompanied him thither. At any rate, he is to be found in 746 engaged on mission work within the Duke's dominions.

Saint Boniface, in his capacity as Papal Legate, visited this part of Germany in that year and an incident occurred which is interesting from more than one point of view. A priest of the neighbourhood, ill-versed in Latin, had baptized his neophytes "In nomine Patria et Filia et Spiritus Sancti". Saint Boniface held that baptism thus administered was invalid; Saint Vergil disagreed and the question was referred to Rome for decision. Pope Zachary in his reply, sided with Saint Vergil on the theological issue and went on to urge Saint Boniface to friendly co-operation with the Irish missionaries.

Shortly afterwards Bishop John of Salzburg died. Vergil was nominated to the vacant see. Like many another Irish monk he felt himself to be unworthy of the

episcopal dignity. As abbot, therefore, of Saint Peter's, the most ancient and venerable monastery at Salzburg, he ruled the diocese, while one of his monks, Dubdácric, was consecrated bishop and exercised the various functions reserved to that higher order. Saint Boniface complained to the Pope also about this irregular procedure but apparently without result, for many years were to pass before Vergil brought the anomalous position to an end by accepting episcopal consecration.

On yet another issue the Irish and the English saint could not agree. Vergil, true to his title of "Geometer", taught the sphericity of the earth and the existence of Antipodes. Saint Boniface complained to the Pope about this doctrine, which he regarded as heretical. Vergil's teaching may be regarded as evidence of a good classical education. The opinion that the earth was round had come to be a part of Greek speculation at a comparatively early period. It was introduced by the Pythagoreans, confirmed with solid arguments by Parmenides and gradually accepted as the orthodox view by well-informed Greeks and Romans. But with the collapse of the Roman Empire and the virtual disappearance of the old learning, the disc theory of the masses had driven the scholarly theory into the background. However, some of the great Christian doctors, Saint Augustine, Isidore of Sevilla, the Venerable Bede, knew and defended the ancient philosophic doctrine. It was from one of these, most probably from Saint Isidore, that Vergil had taken this teaching.

The problem of the Antipodes caused more difficulty to mediaeval scholars. They were all aware that the tract of earth known to them did not comprise the whole of the earth's surface. It was argued, then, that other continents must exist and that in all probability they were inhabited. But inhabited by whom? The Venerable Bede, wise Englishman that he was, leaves the question unasked and therefore unanswered.

Vergil, the impetuous Irishman, put the question and answered it in his own way, to the horror of the apostle of Germany. Strange to relate, the Pope of the day, Zachary, was himself a keen student of geography. He warned Saint Boniface to take no severe step against the alleged offender and he wrote to Salzburg with orders to Vergil to come to Rome and defend his views. There our knowledge of the incident ends. What is certain is that Vergil was not condemned. He was left in possession of his see, and his Irish priest companion, Sidonius, against whom the same charges had been levelled, was raised to the bishopric of Passau.

Vergil did much to evangelize the Slav population of the neighbouring lands of Carinthia. In course of time this area was converted to the Christian faith and organized as part of the ecclesiastical province of Salzburg.

He built, too, a cathedral in Salzburg, dedicated to Saint Rupert, the first missionary to the Germanic population of the city. The building was complete in 774 and on 24 September of that year was solemnly consecrated. The relics of Saint Rupert were then brought in procession from Saint Peter's to a more honourable resting place in the new edifice. According to the inscription on his grave Vergil enriched the diocese with other handsome churches and monasteries. Nor is it proper to forget his restoration of ruins from the early Christian period, when Salzburg was the Roman Iuvavum. Two of the old monastic caves on the mountainside were re-dedicated to Saint Patrick and Saint Gertrude.

It is interesting also to note that Vergil took an active interest in the literary traditions of Salzburg and its neighbourhood. The short account of Saint Rupert, which is still the chief source for the life of that saint, owed its composition to his initiative. Mention has already been made of the valuable *Life* of Saint Corbinian of Freising.

It was Vergil who stimulated his episcopal colleague in Freising to get that *Life* written. Another important monument to his literary activity is the *Confraternity Book* of Saint Peter's in Salzburg, still preserved in the original. It corresponds with the *Félire* or *Martyrology* of Oengus and similar works in Ireland. Saint Patrick, of course, had a prominent position in the list of saints from whom the Salzburg brethren wished to receive spiritual benefits; and all the abbots of Iona are mentioned from Saint Colmcille to Slebéne, the fifteenth abbot, who died in 767. Vergil himself died on 27 November, 784. His successor, Bishop Arn, speaks openly of his pride in being chosen to take the place of so holy and so distinguished a prelate. The pious Alcuin wrote a long memorial poem, ornate with phrases taken from a host of Latin authors, on Vergil's virtues; while a local Salzburg poet, of equal good will, if not of equal erudition, wrote a flattering inscription for the saint's tomb. Fourteen years after his death Salzburg was raised to archiepiscopal status by Pope Leo III. During troubles in the city in 1167 the cathedral of Saint Rupert, which Vergil had built, was destroyed by fire. When the foundations for the new cathedral were being laid in 1181, Vergil's tomb, still easily recognised by the sepulchral inscription, was exposed to view. Thither the people flocked in crowds to beg the holy bishop's aid in their trials and sorrows. Miracles were soon recorded. In 1230 Archbishop Eberhard II introduced the cause of canonization. A commission, consisting of the Bishop of Brixen and two abbots, was appointed by the Holy See to conduct the investigation. Their report was favourable and on 10 June, 1233, Vergil of Achadbó and of Salzburg was raised by Pope Gregory IX to the honours of the altar. And right through the centuries the beautiful city of the Salzach, nestling between the green Mönchsberg and the wooded Kapuzinerberg has shown special devotion to this Irish saint.

Wherever these Irish missionaries laboured they took with them the cult of the two most venerated home saints, Patrick and Brigid. It is remarkable that in eastern Steiermark pilgrimages in honour of Saint Patrick were made in many parishes down to the nineteenth century. A long litany of the Saint was published in 1766. Saint Brigid was honoured in the Rhineland, in central and southern Germany, in Switzerland, especially in Saint Gall, Graubünden, Einsiedeln and Basel, in Alsace and Lorraine. Since she had connections as a girl with the dairy, she became the natural patroness of women and the cattle which they tended in the rural countryside. As the foundress of a celebrated convent, her cult was also popular among mediaeval nuns.

It goes without saying that the mighty Emperor Charlemagne had contacts with Ireland. Einhard goes so far as to say that the Irish kings (*Scottorum reges*) received magnificent gifts at his hands, spoke of him as their lord and of themselves as his subjects. Whether this is true in whole or part, or whether it is merely the language of panegyric, must remain uncertain. We know that Charles had Irish teachers, Clemens and Dicuill, in his Schola Palatina. At Pavia, in northern Italy, an Irishman, Dúngal, held a post corresponding to what is now a chief inspectorship of schools. Joseph, an abbot, who was "*Scottus genere*", wrote pious verse for the Emperor's edification. A letter is extant from Charles to an Irishman, Dúngal, probably of Saint-Denys, asking for information on those absorbing topics, nothingness and darkness (*de nihilo et tenebris*); while two letters from the same Dúngal to Charles may still be read. One, written in 811, explains the occurrence of two solar eclipses (one of them, in fact, an illusion) in the preceding year, 810; and the second congratulates Charles on the entrance of the imperial princess, Theodrada, into a convent novitiate. So Irish scholars were numerous in the Frankish kingdom. Einhard adds that they

were so well treated there that many regarded them as a burthen.

There can be no doubt that Charlemagne was esteemed by the Irish of his day as the greatest of contemporary rulers. To an Irish king, even the high-king, his court must have appeared fantastically splendid and elegant and his military power overwhelming, his financial resources stupendous. His death, on 28 January, 814, is chronicled in the *Annals of Ulster*: *Karalus, rex Francorum, immo Imperator totius Europae, moritur*, (Charles, King of the Franks and Emperor of all Europe, dies). These words show that he was regarded as, in a sense, the secular head of the Christian world. His name, *Carolus*, and the honorific adjective attached to it, *Magnus*, were adopted into the Irish language. Carolus was the name of a father-in-law of Brian Borumha, and is an ancestor of the great family of O'Brien. It may well be the basis also of a family name, Ó Carlusa, now transformed into a pseudo-Spanish or Portuguese surname, Carlos, in the county Roscommon. Magnus, the adjective, also became a Christian name, and is still with us as the base of the distinguished family name, Mac Manus.

Irish influence on Europe did not cease with Charlemagne; it continued through the ninth century under his successors. At this time the *peregrini* were not, as in earlier times, hermits, monks and ascetics, but teachers, whose chief purpose was academic or educational. There were exceptions, like Marcus and Moengal of Saint Gall, but the most distinguished names, Sedulius Scottus and his companions, Fergus, Flann (Blandus), Marius, Beuchell at Liège and Johannes Scottus (Eriugena) and his companions in Laon and Rheims are those of secular professors. Sedulius ranked as a philosopher and a theologian but his chief claim to fame is a collection of eighty-three Latin poems from his pen. His knowledge of Greek was impressive. Though living at Liège his activity was

not confined to that city but reached across into Germany, to the dioceses of Köln, Münster and Metz. More important than Sedulius was Eriugena, not merely because of his translations from the Greek but because of his capacity for original thought. His *opus magnum*, *De Divisione Naturae*, shows intellectual strength of a very high order. Between Boethius and the rise of the Scholastics in the eleventh century, there is nothing to compare with it. His basic thought was Platonist, but Plato would have got many a surprise and shock had he lived to read Eriugena's conclusions. Very remarkable is the purity and beauty of his Latin style; he handled that language with consummate ease and confidence. His influence on later thought is beyond the scope of this essay save in so far as it affected Germany. Historians of philosophy point out that beyond the Rhine his teaching took two courses, one through Eckhart and the German mystics, the second through Nicolaus of Cusa and some of the Renaissance thinkers. Nicholas classed Eriugena with Dionysius the Areopagite, Maximus and Hugo of Saint Victor. There is a striking resemblance between the whole system of Cardinal Nicholas, as set forth in his principal work, *De Docta Ignorantia*, (1440) and that of Eriugena. If we agree with M. Francois Picavet (*Esquisse d'une histoire générale et comparée des philosophes médiévales*, p.150) that Eckhart and Jakob Boehme are the true ancestors of the great philosophers of modern Germany, Kant, Fichte, Hegel, Schelling, Baader, Schopenhauer, we see that the name of Eriugena could not properly be omitted in even the briefest survey of Irish-German associations.

Reference has already been made to the Irishmen, Marcus and Moengal, at Saint Gall. Marcus, a bishop, enriched the library there with a present of books in the ninth century. His nephew, Moengal, "*vir doctissimus et optimus*", taught in the monastic school. The *Necrologium* of Notker Balbulus gives the names of twenty Irish saints. By

far the greater number of Irish teachers in Germany remain anonymous. We would be ignorant of their very existence were it not for the libraries. To take a few examples: Irish influence appears in the Gospel of Saint Boniface, the *Codex Paulinus Augiensis* and *Augiensis CCXI*, (Reichenau MSS. of the New Testament), the *Codex Paulinus Wirzburgensis II* (Würzburg) and *Codex Paulinus Latinus Monacensis*, 9545 (Munich), the *Confraternity Book of Pfaffers*, the *Enchiridion Sancti Augustini* in Trier, the *Computus* in Nancy, not to mention a host of schoolbooks. How great was this Irish influence was formerly only suspected; in our day it is being revealed in ever more surprising extent by Professor Bernhard Bischoff, of the University of Munich. Some of us Irishmen could hardly suppress our astonishment when we heard of this from his own lips.

Intimate Irish connections with Germany did not end with the ninth century. There is another Irish *peregrinatio* which dates from the tenth century to the twelfth. This movement was once again ascetical and religious rather than educational. In these Irish pilgrims the Cluniac reformers found enthusiastic helpers. Metz, Toul, Verdun, Köln and the monastery of Waulsort in the Ardennes were centres of activity. Space does not permit more than a few passing references. In 975 the Canons in the church of Saint Martin at Köln were replaced by Irishmen of the reform who in the next century transformed the church into a celebrated monastery ruled by a long series of Irish abbots. A second community in Köln is mentioned in 1042. To one of these went as a weary pilgrim, Broen—or Bran, king of Leinster, son of Maelmórda, King of Leinster, who was slain with the Norse fighting against Brian Borumha at the Battle of Clontarf. This Leinster alliance with the Northmen did not long survive the battle. In 1018 Broen was captured and blinded by Sigtryg, King of Dublin. Broen, thus mutilated, had to resign his

throne. He repaired to Köln and lived there in religious retirement until his death in 1052. From him the great Leinster family of O'Byrne takes its name.

The *Gesta Hamburgensis Ecclesiae* of Adam of Bremen recall the missionary zeal of Archbishop Adalbert, who ruled the sees of Hamburg and Bremen from 1043 to 1072. Adalbert sent a number of bishops and priests as evangelists into the northern regions. Irishmen, both called Johannes, figure in this list. The second of these, John, "*quidam Scottorum episcopus*", a simple and Godfearing man, was martyred by the heathen Wends in Mecklenburg in 1066.

The eleventh century, to the Norman Invasion of England by William the Conqueror, was a period marked by many Irish pilgrimages to Rome. These were made easier by the generosity of Knut, King of Denmark and England, who journeyed to Rome in 1027 and profited by the opportunity to buy for a lump sum the customs' dues levied on travellers by many of the local rulers. Five royal pilgrims made the long journey to the Eternal City during these years. The most distinguished of the five was Donnchad, son of Brian Borumha, who resigned the kingship of Munster in 1063 and died in Rome in 1064. His body lies buried in the ancient church of Santo Stefano Rotondo.

An Irish pilgrim, named Colman, was mistaken for a spy and murdered at Stockerau near Vienna in 1012 or 1014. Rumours soon spread of miracles worked by the body of the holy man. When these came to the ears of the Austrian Markgraf Heinrich he caused the remains to be brought with due pomp and ceremony to his town of Melk, on the Danube, and to be enclosed in a costly shrine. Devotion to the Irish martyr spread afterwards far and wide.

No less than two Irishmen in eleventh-century Germany were known as Marianus Scottus. One of these, Maelbrigde, had been a monk in Mag Bile (Movice), County Down, under a distinguished abbot Tiger-

nach Baircech, who died in 1061. Marianus left Ireland for exile as a penance in 1056 and after some time spent at Saint Martin's in Köln went on to Fulda. He was ordained priest in the church of Saint Kilian at Würzburg, and in 1061 had himself walled in as an *inclusus* in Fulda. When his patron, the local abbot, became Archbishop of Mainz, he ordered Marianus to change his place of residence to the latter city. Though cut off from the world Marianus wrote a *Chronicle* which contained a number of interesting Irish items. It still survives. He supported enthusiastically Pope Gregory VII in his celebrated struggle with King Henry IV, though his archbishop, in the same struggle, maintained a far from comfortable equilibrium sitting on the fence.

The other Marianus, whose Irish name was Muiredach Mac Robartaig, of the family who were hereditary custodians of the *Cathach* in Donegal, set out for Rome on pilgrimage with two companions in 1067. Their way lay through Germany. When they arrived at Bamberg they stayed for a year at the monastery of Michelsberg. After this refreshing rest they went on to Regensburg, where they visited a fellow Irishman named Muirchertach, who was living there as an *inclusus*. He induced them to stay permanently in Regensburg. Marianus built in that city, in 1071, the Irish monastery dedicated to Saint Peter, known afterwards as Weih-Sankt-Peter. Twelve years later he died, having in the meantime become famous as a scribe. Weih-Sankt-Peter became the mother-house of quite a large Benedictine congregation: Saint Jakob of Regensburg in 1111, Würzburg even earlier and again in 1138, Nürnberg in 1140, Konstanz in 1142, Vienna in 1155 and Eichstätt in 1183. Gilla-na-naem Laigen, who had been bishop at Glendaloch, died as head of the Schottenkloster of Würzburg in 1085 (AFM.). Christianus (Gilla Críst) became abbot of Saint Jakob at Regensburg in 1133. He was a Munster McCarthy, probably a near

relative of Cormac McCarthy, who was king of Desmond from 1123 to 1138. It was this Cormac who built Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel between 1127 and 1134, when the Chapel was consecrated. In their book, *Early Christian Ireland*, Máire and Liam de Paor suggest (p.178) that some of the masons who built the chapel came from Regensburg. For that beautiful type of architecture we thus owe much to Germany. As Cormac's Chapel was imitated far and wide, the aesthetic standards of the Irish nation as a whole must thereby have been considerably enhanced.

The Congregation had houses in Ireland, one certainly at Ross in West Cork, another probably in Cashel. Indeed the Abbot Christian McCarthy just mentioned is said to have died in Cashel in 1150. Irish priories would serve as collecting places and novitiates for the monks who would in due course be transferred to the German monasteries.

Another curious link with Cashel remains to be mentioned. The present patron of the archdiocese is Saint Albert. He is said to have been a bishop in Germany and to have come as a pilgrim from Regensburg to Cashel, where he became (arch)bishop. His brother Erhard came with him also from Regensburg and became bishop of Ardagh. Doctor John Hennig showed that Ardagh is a mistake for Armagh and that the legend goes back to a time between 1111 and 1152 when Armagh and Cashel were the only archbishoprics in the country. So each of the two brothers could wear his *pallium*, one in the north in Armagh, the other in the south in Cashel. It is sad to think that the very existence of this Albert is doubtful, for his *Life* does not merit much respect. It makes him out to be an Englishman, a *natio prava et perversa*, as the writer ungraciously adds. Of him nothing further need be said save that it showed enterprise on the part of the Archbishop of Cashel, James Butler II, to select as the heavenly


protector of his most typical Irish diocese such an exotic patron. He would have been surprised to learn that the current which moved his brain to action had been generated some seven centuries before in Regensburg. The Schottenklöster carried on the work of the earlier Carolingian evangelists in disseminating throughout Germany popular devotions of a very Irish character. Doctor Balthasar Fischer, of Trier, who is a pioneer in this form of research, has provided some astonishing examples. Excellent work on the Schottenklöster has been done by Professor Binchy, the

American Doctor Barry, and Professor Aubrey Gwynn, S.J. The monasteries remained in Irish hands until the sixteenth century, when the canny Scots, profiting by the name Schotten, 'Scotti' (Irish), in the title of the Congregation, got possession of the monastic properties at Regensburg and Würzburg.

So, in this way and in that, through the long series of the years Ireland and Germany have influenced one the other. Those early relations traced here in outline were mostly of the spirit; and we have reason to be thankful for them.



Altar at Holy Island (near Mountshannon) Co. Clare



The Deeper Level of Early Irish Literature

by

JAMES CARNEY

THE Irish vernacular literature, in the strict sense of what is written rather than what is only told or chanted, came into being about A.D. 600. Despite wars, invasions and catastrophic social changes, this literature has had a continuous existence down to the present day. Its very coming into being, in face of the dominant Latin culture, was something of a miracle; its continuation for nearly fourteen centuries no less so. No vernacular literature in Europe has had such a lengthy run and this very fact places Irish literature in a special position. From the *Amra Coluim Chille* (a curious poem, or perhaps, rather, two poems, written shortly after the death of Colum Cille in 597) down to the folk-tale recorded in modern times, the creative work of Máirtín Ó Cadhain, and a group of modern Gaelic poets and writers, Ireland may be looked upon as a well-equipped laboratory for the study of the nature, origin and evolution of literature and its function in the total social complex.

Unfortunately it must be said that too little use has been made of this laboratory. There is not in existence any adequate up-to-date work providing the average reader, or indeed the specialist, with a comprehensive view of Irish literature from its remote beginnings down to the present day; even the splendid archives of the Irish Folklore Commission, collected with such care and diligence, considering their great mass, must be regarded as virtually unexamined.

Despite some excellent work, such as that done by the late Professor Gerard Murphy, Doctor Eleanor Knott, as well as other scholars, the study of the earliest literature has lain for many years in a state of lassitude. The reasons for this are complex, but I will try to give some idea of the nature of the problem.

An early Irish tale or poem cannot usually be read and immediately understood by any living scholar. This may be because it contains words or phrases which

cannot at the moment be understood and which may be vital to the understanding of the whole. This problem, though it will never be entirely eliminated, is being progressively mitigated by the magnificent work over the years of the group of lexicographers working under the auspices of the Royal Irish Academy. If I may refer to my own experience in this matter as an illustration of the position I would make this confession: I have never come upon a hitherto unpublished early poem in a manuscript which (from a purely linguistic point of view) was completely intelligible to me on a first, or indeed a second or third reading. The scholarly processes of transcription, contemplation, comparison with other works, dating, elucidation of obscure words and phrases, will lead to a greater understanding, but unfortunately some little crux will almost always remain. This means that the greater part of a scholar's time and energy must necessarily be devoted to a strictly scientific and technical task before he can even begin to see his work in a broader literary and aesthetic perspective.

For this very understandable reason our universities and learned institutions have tended to concentrate on the mechanical and linguistic and the study of the course of Irish literature has always been relegated to a secondary place. Osborn Bergin was one of our greatest and most memorable scholars and our indebtedness to him will continue through many generations; not so much, indeed, for his publications, which were meagre enough, but for his teaching, his emphasis on accuracy, his part in the formation, directly or indirectly, of all Irish scholars of his time, of ours, and of time to come. 'Early Irish Literature' appeared, indeed, on Bergin's syllabus. But his whole time was devoted to the teaching of grammar and the reading of texts. When it came to literature we were recommended to read (in our spare time) the fine, but lamentably

insufficient, article in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

Part of the problem of understanding Irish literature may be illustrated here by the publication of a poem which I transcribed nearly a quarter of a century ago, but which has lain all these years in my desk for the simple reason that I have a very inadequate understanding of it.)¹

1. Gas lossa
conu duilli barruaini
tucc duine dam indossa.
2. Na cella
cé occu ro-throiscemmar
ní fuarammar co gremma.
3. Muir uaine
port na hinse i n-athaigenn,
commór ticc is téit uaide.
4. Muir aibthech
mo-génar dian comhúthaig
'maraen is talam tairthech.
5. Ro-fetar
is imda tonn trethanglas
imm dúnad meic ríg Bretan.
6. Rom-úraig
fairrge uaine ailénach
etrumm is fer in dúnaid.
7. Rom-bánaig
ben buide is sí drochlámach
d'fhaicsin aice 'na grádaib.
8. Rom-lochraig
étach uaine ildathach
d'fhaicsin imm duine ndochraid.
9. Mo lennán
iar tuidecht ónd fhírthiprait
iar n-innlach a dá gel-lám.
10. Is brígmair
in folt 'na ualach lethordlach
cen anad icá chírad.

11. Druimm n-uball,
is doilge cech ndedenach,
is usa a écc 'ná a fhulang.

1. A sprig of a herb, with its green-topped foliage, someone has given me now.

2. The monasteries (though in them we fasted) we did not get it with morsels.

3. The green sea flows and ebbs equally from the island abode that it frequents.

4. Happy he who is equally at home in the stormy sea and the fruitful land.

5. I know that there is many an ocean-blue wave about the dwelling of the son of the king of the Britons.

6. It has angered me to see a green island-studded sea between me and the owner of the fort.

7. It has made me white to see a yellow-skinned abusive woman with him in his dignities.

8. It has enraged me to see an ugly one clothed in green, many-coloured clothes.

9. My beloved has come from the pure spring, having washed his two white hands.

10. Full of life is the hair, a load of half-inches, constantly being combed.

11. Ridge of apples! Hardest is every last thing; easier his death than to sustain him.

What can we say about this poem? It is in a very rare metre called *treochair*, hitherto only known from two ninth-century examples. Granted a single emendation, it can too, I think, be dated with

probability to the same century. I suspect that the herb in question may be a herb called *lus meic rig Bretan*, 'the herb of the son of the king of the Britons', a term found in Scotland in the eighteenth century denoting wild thyme. But these observations bring us nowhere near a full understanding, and much more thought is necessary, accompanied perhaps by a flash of inspiration. One suspects that it is a fine poem. We are reduced, however, to the comment of a king in a mediaeval Irish tale who, on hearing a poem that he only partially understood, indulged in a little waffling. 'It is a fine poem,' he said, 'for anybody who could understand it.'

It would serve no useful purpose in this short article to catalogue and comment upon the central literary products of early Ireland, the lyric poetry, the Ulster-Connacht tales, The Calender of Oengus, *Saltair na Rann*, *Acallam na Senórach*, the poems of Blathmac, son of Cú Brettan. Information on all these matters can be had in several popular works which have appeared in recent years. An adequate general work on early Irish literature, as well as dealing with what is central, or well-known, would also give information about lesser works, many of which, in one way or another may have a greater importance than a casual reading might suggest. I will, therefore, present the reader with a triad of selected tales in translation, with some comment that will enable him to see what the tale might have meant to a contemporary reader in the early Irish period, and to emphasise the fact that, in each case, as with the poem I quoted, there is a level of meaning deeper than would appear on a first reading.

I

THIS IS THE FARING-FORTH OF CONLE COEM, SON OF CONN CÉTCHATHACH.²

Why is Art Óenfer (Art, the Lone) so called? Not difficult.

One day Conle, the Red-haired son of Conn Cétchathach, was beside his father on the top of the Hill of Uisnech. Suddenly he saw a woman in strange dress coming toward him. "Where have you come from, woman?" he asked.

"I come," said the woman, "from the Lands of the Living, where there is neither sin, nor death, nor transgression. We eat everlasting feasts without their needing to be served. We have gentle contest without strife.

We are in great peace, and from this we are called the People of Peace (*Aes side*)³.

"Who are you talking to?" asked Conn of his son, for no one saw the woman, except Conle alone. The woman answered: "He speaks to a beautiful young woman of noble race who looks forward to neither death nor old age. I have loved Conle, the Redhaired. I call him to the Plain of Delights where the eternal Boadag is king, having had no weeping nor woe in his land since he took sovereignty."

"Come with me, Conle the Redhaired, of freckled neck, shining like a candle-flame. The golden diadem of hair over your gleaming face will be the sign of your royal aspect. If you come with me your form will not lose its youth and beauty until the Day of Doom."

Conn said to his druid, whose name was Corán, for all had heard what the woman said although they did not see her:

"I beseech you, Corán, great in song, great in art. Trouble has come upon me that is greater than my counsel, greater than my strength, a trial such as has not happened to me since I took sovereignty. An invisible form is forcing me, seeking to steal my fair son by evil acts, taking him from the king's side by women's spells."

The druid then chanted a spell against the voice of the woman so that no one heard her voice nor did Conle hear her from that time. When the woman was

departing, forced by the great spell of the druid, she threw an apple to Conle. Conle spent a month without a bite, neither drink nor food. No other food seemed worth eating but his apple. However much he ate of it, it grew no less but remained still whole and perfect. Conle began to feel longing for the woman he had seen. On the day when a month had passed Conle was beside his father in Magar-Chommin when he saw coming towards him the same woman, who said to him: "Conle sits on a high seat amongst the doomed, waiting for horror-inspiring death. The eternal living ones invite you. You are a champion for the people of Tethra⁴ who watch you every day amongst your dear familiars in the assemblies of your fatherland."

When Conn heard the woman's voice he said to his people: "Call the druid to me. I see her speech has been given back to her to-day." Then the woman said:

"Conn of the Hundred Battles, do not give honour to druidry—it accomplishes few judgments (?) upon the Great Strand. In a short time there will come a just man⁵ with many wonderful households. His law will destroy the spells of druids despite the evil magic-working Devil."

Now Conn wondered that Conle would answer no one, wanting only that the woman should come.

"Has what the woman says touched your heart, Conle?" asked Conn.

Conle answered: "It is not easy for me. I love my people beyond all. But I have been seized by a loneliness for the woman."

The woman then answered saying this:

"You are struggling to get away from them against the wave of your love of home, so that in my crystal boat we might come to the Otherworld dwelling of Boadag, if we should reach it."

"There is another land which it would be better to seek. I see the sun is setting—though it is far we will reach it before nightfall."

"It is the land that rejoices the mind of all who walk about it. There is no race there but women and maidens."

When the woman had finished her speech, Conle leapt away from them into the crystal boat. They saw him gradually disappear, as far as the sight of eye could reach. They then rowed away from them and were never seen from that time forward, and nobody knew where they went. As they pondered to themselves in the assembly they see Art coming towards them. "Art is alone today," said Conn, "for he has no brother."

"You have spoken a word of power," said Corán. "That shall be his name till Doom. Art, the Lone."

And it was for that reason the name became his from that time onwards.



We have much to learn from, and about, this beautiful tale. We know that it existed in a famous eighth-century manuscript, known as the *Cín Dromma Snechta*, or the Book of Drumsnat, written, as the name implies, in the monastery at Drumsnat in Co. Monaghan. The story is not, it will be apparent, an ancient tale written down by a monk from oral recitation. It is just what it seems: a gem-like anecdote composed and written about A.D. 700 and reflecting in many ways the image of that age. It has a close affinity with the contemporary Voyage of Bran, with the Voyage of Mael Dúin, and with Saint Brendan's quest for a terrestrial paradise. But granting that it was written about A.D. 700, there are many questions that press themselves upon us. What sources did the author draw upon? How far does it represent contemporary belief, or have we to do with poetic fantasy? Is there an element of didacticism or allegory, any lesson that might be pointed out to a young student entering the monastic life in Ireland? Finally we may ask: why was this tale ever written at all?

Early Ireland differed from other parts of Europe in many essential matters and one of the most important was that the vernacular was used as a medium of instruction. The student had to learn to read it, to write it and so far as poetry is concerned, he had to learn at a minimum how to compose didactic verse. Now no literary language can be taught without adequate reading matter. At some point in a student's career he would, I am convinced, read out to his teacher such compositions as *The Faring-forth of Conle*.

One of the commonest forms of "knowledge" in Ireland, from the earliest times down to the present day, has been the elucidation of the names of places, or of the nicknames or distinctive epithets of men famous in history. This tale opens with the typical didactic formula: "Why is Art, the Lone, so called?" and before embarking on the tale we are given the comforting and formulaic assurance that the matter is "not difficult." Quite typically the solution of the problem emerges from a chance, and in itself unnoteworthy, utterance made by Art's father at the end of the tale. From the point of view of primitive didacticism the importance of the tale lies in the initial question and the final solution. All the events in between, the contest of the Otherworld woman with Conn's druid, the struggle in Conle's mind whether to choose the woman or life with his people are near irrelevancies. Indeed, how irrelevant and unnecessary these incidents are is shown in the genealogical tradition which gives what I regard as the primary and traditional anecdote of the origin of Art's epithet, and merely refers to the *Faring-forth of Conle* as a secondary (and inferentially later) explanation. In this account which I may quote in translation from the Book of Lecan, we read as follows: "Art the Lone, why is he so called? Not difficult. For in the end Conn had no son except him, for Conle and Crinda were slain by Eochaid Finn

Fuath nAirt and by Fiacha Suige."

This simple tradition, that Art was called Art the Lone, after the slaying in an ordinary human way of his two brothers, is undoubtedly the older tradition. The Old Irish writer who composed *The Faring-forth of Conle* was careful not to violate the essential part of the tradition, that is, that Art, deprived of his last brother, became Art, the Lone. Having made this concession to tradition, he felt free to allow his fantasy to invent a much more delightful and moving account of the circumstances in which the "loneliness" of Art came about, an account moreover, which had more relevance to some of the intellectual problems that faced an Irishman of about A.D. 700 when he tried to accommodate his inherited pagan beliefs and ideas to the dominant Christian and monastic culture of the age.

In this tale we are presented with the opposition of two philosophies, the first being the native, the druidic, the doomed, and this is represented by the druid Corán. The other embodies a prophecy of the coming of Christianity; it tells of the existence of another world where there is neither strife nor sin nor transgression, where youth and bloom are eternal.

It is impossible to maintain that we are presented here with an Irish pre-Christian view of the Otherworld. The "prophecy" of Patrick, combined with condemnation of sin and strife, and the opposition of the "Otherworld" woman to the druid and to druidry is sufficient to show this. Were this a "primitive, pagan" tale, the druid, far from being in opposition to the "Otherworld" would claim, we may assume, to be in intimate contact with it. The tale is partly an effort to rationalise the virtually ineradicable Irish belief in "fairies", or "Otherworld Beings."

The rationalization, as we can gather from a study of *Immram Brain*, and similar compositions, took the following form: the Otherworld folk do, indeed, exist,

and their existence is not incompatible with Christian teaching. They are descendants of Adam and Eve, before they committed their transgression. They are begotten without sexual act, and live a life of perfect peace and harmony such as would be ours had our first parents not sinned. They can see us but we cannot see them because our perception is dimmed by the darkness of Adam's sin (*temel immorbais Ádaim*). On this basis a certain degree of acceptance of the fairies was possible, and our early writer could even use a belief current down almost to our own times, that beautiful young children, especially boys, are in grave danger of being "taken" by the fairies. Hence never admire a child without saying "God bless it," as a measure of protection against an ever-present danger.

Finally, I would say that the young monastic student, reading this tale, is faced with a problem very similar to Conle's. He is asked to give up all that is familiar for the sake of eternal life, and he may well say, with equal pathos, *ní réid dam. Sech cách caraim mo doíni*, "It is not easy for me. Beyond all I love my people."

The *Faring-forth of Conle* is then a most interesting exemplification of the conflict in early Ireland between the monastic and the native way of life.

II

THE MUSICAL SOUNDS OF BUCHET'S HOUSE

The Leinstermen had a hospitaller⁶ named Buchet. The house of Buchet was a guest-house for the men of Ireland. The fire under his cauldron was never quenched since he set up his household.

He had in his care for fosterage a daughter of Cathaer Már, son of Feidlimid, that is, Eithne. Cathaer had twelve sons and a score, and they used to visit as guests and to talk to their sister. In twenties and thirties they availed themselves of hospi-

tality, and thought little enough of this but expected presents besides. Great, indeed, were their demands and their following, and when they failed to get enough they indulged in gross misbehaviour towards Buchet's people. One of them would take the geldings, another the foals, a third the best of the cattle, so that in the end the sons of Cathaer impoverished him completely, leaving him with nothing but seven cows and a bull, where before there were seven herds, with seven score cattle in each herd.

So he went, one day, to complain to Cathaer, who, at that time, was a decrepit old man. And Buchet said:

"O my just Cathaer, preserve the law that has been left over the land of Ireland.

I cry out for (?) my wealth carried off by your sons, without offences in law on my part.

Show goodness, for my hospitality, with its hospitaller's customs, was the equal of any hospitality.

The loss of me will be a great harm to the land of Cathaer.

The sons of Cathaer have ruined my hospitality and my cattle: Ross of the Strong Blows, Crimthan, the First-slaying, Dáire, the Thrice-womanish, Loscán, the Splendid, Eochaid, the Princely, Bresal, the Greyface, Fiacha, the Longhaired, who shall rule all.

Buchet will not be as he has been before until he comes to another land, which the grandsons of Feidlimid cannot reach."

Then Cathaer answered, saying:

"True, Buchet, you have been a hospitaller feeding great companies.

You have virtue in fervour, in generosity, in bravery. You make each one welcome in your great court.

If only I had power over my sons they would not torment your heart.

I cannot perform an act of strength. A running I cannot run. A leap I cannot leap, and not far can my sight perceive.

I have enjoyed kingship for fifty long years.

If only I had power I would lead his cattle to Buchet.

I can do nothing for you, Buchet, but to say: the younger the thorn the sharper it is.

Betake yourself from the land."

During the course of the night Buchet fled from them by stealth, and came to Kells of the Kings in the north. It was a small migration: seven cows and a bull, he and his old wife, and the girl Eithne, daughter of Cathaer.

They lived in a little cabin in the forest and the girl was their serving-maid.

Cormac, grandson of Conn, then lived in Kells . . . One day when Cormac was in Kells, having taken kingship, he saw the girl Eithne milking cows. The first milking she put in a special vessel, the last milking in another. Then he sees her cutting rushes, and the middle of the bunch of rushes she put into a separate bundle. Furthermore, the water that she took from the edge of the stream she put into one vessel, the water from the middle into another. Then Cormac asked: "Who are you, girl?"

"The daughter of a poor herdsman yonder," she answered.

"If I may ask, why do you divide the water, and the rushes, and the milk?"

"For a man who was formerly honoured," she answered, "I take the last of the milk, and the middle of the rushes, and the middle of the stream, so that he may not be without honour from what I shall get. The rest is for myself. If I could find a greater honour, he should have it."

"It is likely that you will find it," said Cormac. "To whom is the honour given?"

"His name is Buchet."

"Is that Buchet of Leinster?"

"Yes, indeed," said she.

"Are you Eithne, the Tall, daughter of Cathaer Már?"

"It would seem so," she said.

Cormac then sent a message to Buchet,

asking to be given the girl. He would not give her, because the right of giving lay with her father, Cathaer Már. Now they say that she was taken to him at night by force. And she only slept with him on that night, and escaped from him. And on that night she conceived in her womb Cairpre Lifechair, son of Cormac—"Lifechair," that is, "who loved the Liffey," and in Lifechair he was reared between his mother's and his father's people. And Cormac did not accept the boy until the Leinstermen took an oath that he was his.

And it was she who was Cormac's queen thereafter. But she did not accept him except on condition that her bride-price should be given to Buchet. This is what Cormac gave him: everything that he could see from the rampart of Kells, during the course of a week, cattle, men, gold and silver, oxen and steeds. It was virtually impossible for Buchet to take all the stock he got across the kingdom into Leinster.

These were the musical sounds of Buchet's house: his laughing smile to the guests, as he came out: 'You are welcome. We will treat you well—let you treat us well.'

The musical sound of the fifty young men in their accoutrement, in their purple garments, playing for entertainment when the guests were merry with drink.

The musical sound of the fifty maidens in the middle of the floor, in their purple tunics, their golden-yellow tresses falling down over their garments, their melody, their crooning and their song entertaining the great company.

From this the name *Esnada Tíge Buchet*, the musical sounds of Buchet's house.



In the *Faring-forth of Conle* we have met Conn of the Hundred Battles and his only surviving son, Art, the Lone. The story of the Battle of Mag Muccrama tells how

Art, on the night before he died, begot his only son, Cormac. *The Musical Sounds of Buchet's House* tells how Cormac, in his turn, begot his son and heir, Cairpre Lifechair, and deals besides with Cathaer Már, his sons, his daughter, Eithne the Tall, and the hospitaller, Buchet of Leinster.

According to the late Professor Tomás O'Rahilly (who is one of the few scholars in modern times to concern himself deeply with the matter of our traditional stories) Cathaer Már is not "historical"; neither is Buchet. Both are "supernatural person-ages," and, in a phrase well known to readers of O'Rahilly's work, are "ultimately identical." Both represent the "Lord of the Otherworld," and Buchet's cauldron represents the "perpetual Otherworld Feast." He tells us: "The story of Buchet and Eithne was in an earlier form a partial version of what was perhaps the most popular of all myths among European peoples, the myth of *The Rival Wooers*. Originally Buchet (alias Cathaer Már) had as consort the goddess Eithne, who in time wearied of him and fell in love with the Hero (here Cormac), who made the difficult journey to the Otherworld to win her" (*Ériu* XVI, p. 18).

O'Rahilly's use of the term "myth" and his attitude to "mythic" legends can be fairly stated as follows: A myth is a primitive "religious" story in which all the characters are supernatural, usually representing phenomena in nature, such as earth, the heavens, sun, moon, etc. In the course of time these stories have become rationalized, but the original forms can be recreated by comparison with similar rationalized or partially rationalized myths, that is, both by intercomparison of Irish and Celtic material, and by comparison of the Celtic material with that of related cultures. In this process the etymologising of the names and epithets of the characters sometimes assumes a great importance.

It must be stated that O'Rahilly's

approach to such complicated material usually requires a greater act of faith than most scholars are capable of making.

It leads to the proposition that an amazing number of the characters who throng the scene in early Irish saga are "ultimately identical," and a great number of stories are gobbled up wholesale by two incredibly greedy themes, *The Rival Wooers* and *The Birth of the Hero*. We are also asked to believe inferentially that both names and incidents have been transmitted together from the very remote period (so remote perhaps that one doubts if we can justifiably refer to it by the term "Irish") when the "myth" was a religious reality, operative, accepted, and fully understood.

I would like to suggest a quite different approach to this and many other such tales.

The story of Buchet was probably written in the eighth or ninth century. It incorporates a genealogical doctrine taught in the native Irish schools, or in some of them. This doctrine, and many elements in the story as preserved, may have had quite a long period of oral currency in the Irish schools. We are to accept it as it is, without putting it through any severe process of "derationalizing."

In all Irish literature special importance is attached to the circumstances of the birth of great dynastic figures, or, indeed, of great cultural figures such as Morand, the lawgiver, and Cumáine Fota, the seventh-century churchman. In creating any birth-story the creator, whether on an oral or a literary level, had in his mind an abstract story-pattern, an abstraction made from dozens of similar stories which he had read or heard. This story, which in a manner resembling the use of the algebraic x , we can call *The Birth of the Hero* had, from very ancient times, a number of incidents proper to it. The problem facing the creator of a "new" birth-story was to make a selection from those incidents and to relate them (with

appropriate adaptation and revision) to what was otherwise known or believed of the historical characters in question. Typical features of such stories are: the mother of the child of destiny is poor, despised, or deprived of her true rank; the child may be begotten by rape or incest, or under some curious or wonderful circumstances; there is persecution or difficulty in youth, but the wonderful destiny is eventually achieved.

Now, in the story of Buchet these factors are clearly present. It is not a story told merely for entertainment, but has deep political implications. This can be best seen if we put ourselves in the position of a ninth-century receiver of this tale who is also a member or supporter of the dominant Uí Néill kindred. He would receive matter, highly emotive for him, purporting as it does to recount events leading up to and involving the then present political circumstances, the dominance of the kindred of whom Cormac and Cairpre Lifechair were ancestors, either real or reputed. This kin claimed special rights over Leinster. The political doctrine implicit in the tale, and its impact at the period in question, would thus be something like this: The greatest kindred in Ireland is descended from Cormac and Cairpre Lifechair. The princes of Leinster are descended from the sons of Cathaer Már who were "a bad lot." They were undutiful to their father Cathaer Már, who was a great and respected monarch. The only good member of the family of the great Cathaer was his daughter. She, in contrast with her brothers, was an exemplification of all the virtues; she is an ancestress of the Uí Néill, who, through her, have received the blood of Cathaer Már.

Such an interpretation gives the tale a contemporary significance, and involves no necessity for change or any process as violent as that of "derationalizing." I might say that, in the present state of Irish

studies, I find it easier to accept the received genealogies back to this period in a most general way (as Mac Neill did) rather than to reject them completely, reducing all the characters to mythic figments. It is possible, however, even probable, that political pressures (especially from the Uí Néill kindred) succeeded in eliminating what was discreditable, and interpolating what was useful, so that while we may accept such characters as Cormac, Cathaer Már, and Cairpre Lifechair as historical, we cannot have great confidence in their inter-relationships as shown in genealogical material.

The tale, as it exists, has a highly poetic quality. It presents a valid picture of life in early Ireland on the aristocratic, the middle-class, and the peasant level. It is told with a simplicity and directness that is in some way reminiscent of parts of the Old Testament, and this, together with content, might allow us to class it with certain other tales as part of Irish political "scripture."

The old king and Buchet converse in a formal, poetically heightened, and deliberately archaic language. Cormac and Eithne converse with dignity, but without the formality and archaism of the two old men. This feature is quite possibly a reflection of the speech-habits of early Irish society.

There is a certain lack of unity in the tale: the element which gives it its title appears as a poetic, but somewhat irrelevant appendage. This suggests that what we have here is a welding into a somewhat unsatisfactory unity of two elements that were originally distinct: *The Birth of Cairpre Lifechair* and *The Musical Sounds of Buchet's House*, the latter being, perhaps, like *Bricriu's Feast*, based on incidents which can occur in the house of an Irish hospitaller, and set at Dún Buchet in Co. Wicklow. In early Ireland literacy was more widely spread in society than in any other European country. This would

account for a certain impression that one gets from this and from many other Irish sagas: that frequently the pen was an oversophisticated instrument for the mind that governed it. The result may be informative, have excellent dialogue, the natural rhythms of Irish speech, and can achieve in part a fine poetic effect. But the whole is frequently—I would almost say almost invariably—somewhat marred by faults of construction. There is a welding together of disparate material in such a way that the joinings show, and the writer has not succeeded in making up his mind whether he is presenting "sober" history or telling a good tale.

III

THE BIRTH OF POETIC ART

Fiacha son of Delbaeth, king of Ireland, was on a royal visitation, accompanied by his brother, Ollam, son of Delbaeth. One day they were eating in Inis Tige in the west of Ireland, that is, the king, Fiacha, and his brother Ollam. Each had half the house. His druid sat in front of the king.

While they were eating at the feast a great gust of wind passed over the house. The greatness of the noise cast them all into silence.

'What does the gust of wind forebode?' Fiacha asked of his druid.

'This is what it forebodes,' said the druid, 'that a wonderful art will arise in Ireland.'

'What kind of art?' asked the king. 'From whom is it born, and in what place?'

'It will be an art of a dignity equal to your own,' said the druid. 'It will be born in this house, from the woman yonder, your brother's wife. She is pregnant, and she will bear a son now and he will have an order equal to your own. [And there will come another wonderful order that

will be nobler, which your orders will serve, the order of the Church.]"

All this came about. The child was born forthwith, and the king sought to slay him. But the boy's father Ollam prevented this, for the king's folk were no more numerous in the house than his. As they were discussing this they heard the child say: 'Lift me up, so that I may speak to the king.'

He is lifted up then. 'Grant me something by your honour, Fiacha,' said he.

'What shall I give you?' asked Fiacha.

'Not difficult:

My land, my coupling,
a full cauldron with a vat,
be given by the king . . .
a vessel, a goblet,
a chariot, a tusk-hilted sword,
thirty cows, a quern,
a band of warriors.

All this is a debt (*fiach*)
to me from Fiacha.'

'It will be given,' said Fiacha. 'What name will be given to the boy now?'

'Let him be called Aí (Poetic Art),' said the druid. It was from this that poetic craft (*aí airchetail*) was so called, that is, from Aí son of Ollam. And that was the first poetical composition spoken by Aí, son of Ollam.



The story, *The Birth of Aí, son of Ollam*, has a number of points of interest and much could be said of it that has already been said of *The Musical Sounds of Buchet's House*. It draws inevitably on the ubiquitous "Birth of the Hero" theme, but illustrates, at the same time, to what diverse uses this theme may be put. There is the prophecy that the child will, in some way, compete with the king; the king's wish to take the child's life; the child being saved and achieving his destiny. The setting and initial development have obviously a close relationship with the story of the birth of Deirdre, as told in *The Exile of*

the Sons of Uislenm. Having said this much we will concern ourselves no further with the comparative aspect, but will deal rather with what the tale means, and what was its contemporary purpose in early and medieval Ireland.

It illustrates well what we have seen in the case of the two previous tales that have been dealt with, that a philosophy and purpose may underlie a tale that on the surface might at first appear as a gathering together of somewhat commonplace incidents. It was not primarily a tale told for entertainment—indeed, it is not particularly entertaining. Its main point is that it stresses the rights owing to the learned classes by the wielders of power. By an ancient contract, going back to Tuatha Dé Danann days, the pseudo-historic reign of Fiacha, son of Delbaeth, son of Ogma, son of Elada, the king of Ireland granted sustenance to men of art, and a social position for an *ollam* equivalent to that of a king. The prophetic reference to the order of power and the order of intellect both becoming subservient to the order of the Church is an obvious addition to the tale. Not an unintelligent nor an uninformed addition, however—in early legal tradition the *ollam* or man of learning of highest rank had nominally the status of a king of a *tuath*. With the coming of Christianity the Christian bishop was quite naturally accorded the same theoretical status.

This simple parable is as relevant now as it was in early and medieval Ireland, for the two Irish states have between them inherited the powers and the obligations of the early princes. They accept (although not always to the extent that men of art, science and learning would wish) that the intellectual classes are worthy of support, necessary to society. The story of the contract of Aí and Fiacha is still capable of telling us, and emphasizing, that for prestige and a place in the sun Ireland must depend more than anything else on

education, on a development of the spiritual and creative forces within herself, creative literature, the visual arts, design, scholarship, everything in fact for which the intellect of man is the raw material.

But to turn especially to that branch of intellectual activity which is most relevant in the present context: the study of early Irish literature. This study labours under a disadvantage which is not generally recognised. Judged as an early medieval literature it is of very wide scope, presenting innumerable problems as well as points

of interest. But its many problems have not been nearly so well dealt with as the literature of England preceding the Norman Invasion. The reason for this is not that Irish scholars are lazy; nor were the German, English, Scandinavian and French scholars, as well as others, who have helped, and at times led them. It is simply that we lack the man-power to bring the study of this literature to a point where an Irishman who so wishes will have adequate tools available to assimilate something of his lengthy and continuous Gaelic past.

FOOTNOTES

1. I give the text here in a normalized and slightly amended version. I hope at some later time to present a complete edition with discussion of manuscript readings and difficulties. 2. In translating this and other tales I have avoided some difficulties, and on completion I availed myself (in the case of the first tale) of the advantage of comparing the result with a translation offered by Professor Jackson in his *Celtic Miscellany*. 3. There is a pun here. *Aes Síde*, means 'The Otherworld (Fairy) Folk', but the author chooses to give the term a primary interpretation of 'People of Peace'. 4. The Otherworld people. 5. St. Patrick. 6. Metaphorically expressed as 'a cauldron of hospitality'.



THE ROCK OF CASHEL

Stone Sculpture

in Pre-Norman Ireland

By

DOMHNALL Ó MURCHADHA

WHEN the High-King Flann Sinna died in 915 the art of the sculptured High Cross must have been nearing maturity. In the north the crosses of Armagh, Arboe, Kells, Monasterboice may well have been in process of construction or already complete. To the south and east the great crosses of Ahenny, of Kilcullen, of Moone were then well over a century in existence. Their combined achievement marked the evolution of design-powers in the arrangement of subject-matter and the treatment of materials that may be assumed to have originated with the incised grave-slabs common to monastic sites as far back as the late seventh century. At the end of Flann's reign, Ireland had already, in efforts extending over almost two and a half centuries of stone carving, established the first School of Sculpture in Western Europe.

The king himself was commemorated some time between the year of his death and the year 924 when the abbot for whom he had erected "a great stone church" in 908 died. His monument took the form of a great figured cross. This cross is reasonably well preserved, despite the many plunderings and burnings of the monastery

and still bears the partly obliterated inscription (C)OLMANDORR. . . SSAAR (IN RIG) FLAIND. (Coleman caused this cross to be made for King Flann).

As we enter the cemetery of Clonmacnois today its warm monolithic mass of yellowish sandstone grit, standing some ten feet high above a low pedestal of similar material, has a friendly warmth against the cool grey limestones of the ruined churches. We have no way of visualising how it looked in its original state but like the pre-Christian sculpture of Europe and the later medieval work, it was probably coloured. From fragments of medieval polychromed sculpture and, indeed, from the experiments in our own time of the sculptor Brancusi, we know that such colour must have profoundly influenced the carved surfaces. We may guess that tints like the brilliant yellow, warm red and bright green used in the decoration of earlier work like the gospel book from nearby Durrow may have brightened the carved surfaces. The colours would have helped to preserve the stone during the early years when its quarry-sap had begun to dry out. That they were harmonious we can hardly doubt from the evidence of the harmonies in the design



RECENTLY DISCOVERED FUNERARY SLAB TO TUATHAL SAER, WHO MAY HAVE BEEN ONE OF THE SCHOOL OF CLONMACNOIS CARVERS
—IT MAY BELONG TO THE ELEVENTH OR TWELFTH CENTURY.

IRISH GRAVE SLAB OF MAEL FINNIA AT CLONMACNOIS.





CROSS OF THE SCRIPTURES (CROSS OF KING FLANN)
CLONMACNOIS, CO. OFFALY, WEST FACE.

of the worn cross itself and from the realization that all the arts which flourished in the monastery workshops must have been activated by the same vision.

The singular unity of this great cross is what impresses one most on a visit to Clonmacnois. Covered from base to top with a brocade of scriptural and other carvings, it never once gives the impression of complexity. Before it one can almost hear reiterated the oft-repeated saying of the masters of the Renaissance and of our own times: simplicity is the final seat of art. Here in this cross the master-sculptor has preserved the primal forms: prism, cube, cylinder, truncated pyramid: the essential elements of all classical art. He has set them together in marvellously measured proportions to form one harmonious whole. Attached to them, as it were, are the figured scenes. They grow out of the stone of the background and form an outer layer echoing the massive surfaces of shaft and wheel. The great Crucifixion echoes the simple geometry of the whole, bending the figure of the Redeemer to the architectural space. What matters here are the outstretched arms of redemption rather than the greater realism of a later time. The old spatial concept of all art is here understood. Figures bend and crouch or stretch to conform to the beauty of shape of perfectly integrated shaft and wheel. Here is what never happens in folk art, an ordered geometry governing the whole, which, like the geometry which the mathematician-artist Piero della Francesca introduced into the art of early Renaissance, never becomes mechanical but always seems filled with life, within its limits. Here we are reminded of the life of our people in these early Christian centuries; of their intense concern with the forces of nature. The nature-poetry of the early monks reveals an understanding of nature's forces which in art is what must be submitted to measured controls.

That this sense of measure was adaptable to a variety of subject and treatment is clear if we compare Flann's Cross with the contemporary one of Abbot Muiredach. This cross commemorates Muiredach MacDomhnaill, chief steward of the southern Ui Neil. The material used here differs only slightly from that of the Clonmacnois monument, being a finer micaceous sandstone of the millstone grit series. Its bulk, however, is almost one and a half times that of Flann's monument, a factor that immediately makes for a change in relief treatment. The series of three-figure panels on the western face presents a formal pressing-out of the bulk to counter the massiveness of the background shaft that makes them seem like forerunners of the porch figure-sculptures of the later middle ages. Again, as the giant shaft enters the die-stone, the massive thrust is eased by the highly developed relief of cats and other animals that surround the base. Here is a subtlety that we normally meet only in a very mature art. There can, I think, be little doubt that the sculptor here at Monasterboice knew of Roman models and there is a Roman (early Christian) sarcophagus carving of Christ giving the Law which is very close to the arrangement of this group of three figures under the wheel on the western face. Here, as at Clonmacnois, the superb mouldings that enclose the shaft have a classical grace that recalls the chaste lines of classical architecture. As panelling composition, Muiredach's cross is far more ambitious. The four-figured scene of David,



KING FLANN'S CROSS, CROSS OF THE SCRIPTURES,
CLONMACNOIS. EAST FACE.



DETAIL FROM EAST FACE OF
KING FLANN'S CROSS:
Christ in Judgement.

VIEW OF THE CATHEDRAL, CHURCHES AND SOUTH CROSS AT CLONMACNOIS, CO. OFFALY.



Goliath, Saul on the western face has really no parallel on the subdivided panelled crosses of the tenth century. The vertical and horizontal spatial arrangements that dominate the Clonmacnois two and three-figure compositions here give place to diagonal movements in the more diverse four-figure panels. Such preoccupations are much closer to a later type of European composition. They involve principles of organization that we do not meet elsewhere in Irish art. The conception of the cross as a whole seems to have the same freedom within the geometric framework as the monument to Flann. At Clonmacnois the southern arm tilts several inches above the level of the northern arm while the great bulk of Muiredach's cross shows many divergences from the vertical when viewed from the north or south sides. The eschewing of rigid geometrical symmetry so characteristic of medieval church-building is here evident in the tenth century.

The magnificent artistry of the sculptors at Monasterboice cannot be fully appreciated merely by a general look at the cross. (Sometimes indeed the Cross of Muiredach looks as though it may originally have had greater height!). It emerges better from an analysis of the structural arrangement of any one of the cross panels. It must be recalled that here we are dealing primarily with relief and the conventions that apply to its organization. The fact that figures are seen against a background is one of the problems, perhaps the main problem, that European sculptors will have to solve for more than six hundred years after the carving of the Cross of Muiredach. This primal understanding, we might almost call it fitness to purpose, enables us to appreciate the particular problems that the sculptors of our figured High Crosses were faced with. The objects carved had not only to distribute themselves happily over the panel-space allotted to them but their highest projections had to be seen as

retaining unity with the surrounding areas of stone. It may be of interest here to note that this convention, with its consideration for the integrity of the entire architectural mass, persisted in European sculpture until the advent of the Gothic. With this first attack on the primal forms, when walls gave place to glass and narrow flying-buttresses replaced the wall volumes, figure-sculpture appeared to detach itself in harmony with other projections. Here at Monasterboice the basic mass is still the all-important primal concept.

In the panel known as the Arrest of Christ these principles, as employed by the tenth-century artist, may be appreciated. His utilization of space shows his superb understanding of design. The arrangement, essentially that of three vertical masses, is latent in the great art of Europe as indeed is the measure that springs from the subdivisions of our crosses. The concentration on the central figure is not overdone, while the soldiers on either side keep the feeling of the panel by the action of their bodies; their heads turn slightly towards the spectator, they are seen in three-quarter view. This amazing artistry also helps to give the required freedom round the head of Christ, reminding one how much the question of design is a question of space. The turning of the heads of the soldiers has often been explained as an early and clumsy attempt at perspective depth. I think, however, that if a true side-profile were shown here on these two heads the whole composition would have suffered. To my mind this very action of the heads shows an understanding of the principles of relief sculpture that has seldom been surpassed. Again, I would ask the reader to note the consummate artistry with which the horizontal contrasting elements of the sword and the vertical sceptre have been placed. Christ here wears a garment fastened at the breast by a pennanular brooch of the same type as the treasure in our National Museum known (mislead-



CROSS OF MUIREDACH
MONASTERBOICE,
CO. LOUTH,
EAST FACE



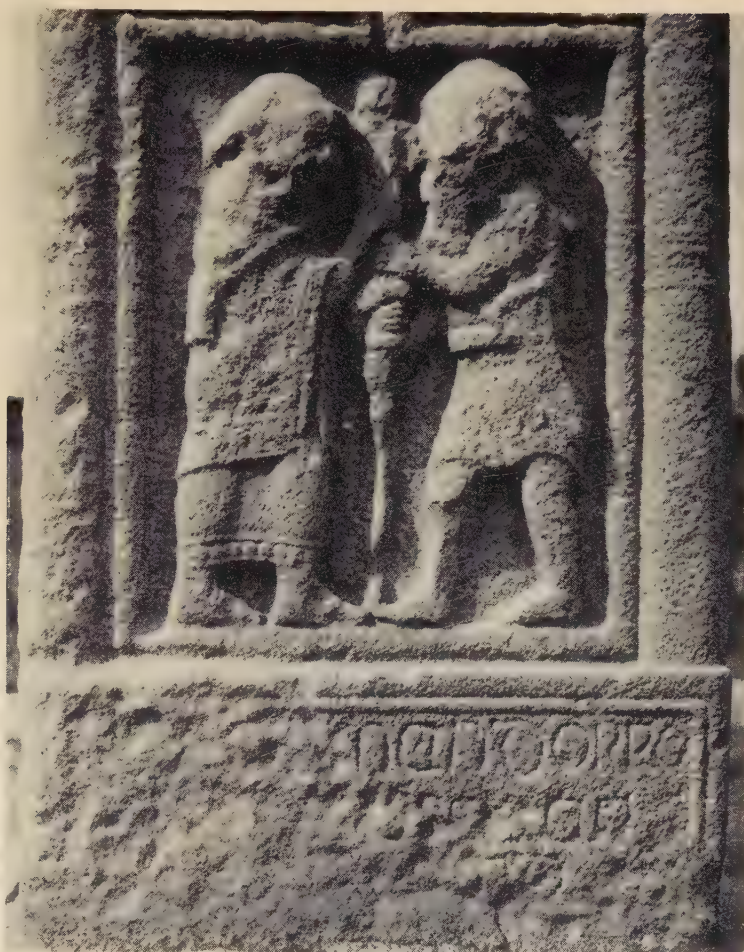
MUIREDACH'S CROSS,
MONASTERBOICE,
CO. LOUTH.
WEST FACE.



CROSS OF MUIREDACH:
(Detail) Arrest of Christ.

ingly) as the Tara Brooch. The folds of this cloak are treated decoratively like the late twelfth-century figures in the Romanesque and Transition periods at Vezelay and at Chartres. Here, as on the Continent, the aim is purely decorative where the garments end in spiral whirls. The effect here, however, is to afford a contrast of texture with the simple flat areas of the background. The massive heads have given rise to much discussion. In the later Romanesque art of Europe a similar treatment of human proportions exists. Many factors are said to be responsible for this divergence from "normal" human proportions. The significance of the human head has been stressed and the suggestion has been made that the proportions derive from popular Roman sculpture. I often wonder whether normal proportions would indeed suit the particular requirements of design and material here. One thing is

certain, if the hands of Christ the Redeemer on Flann's Cross were reduced to the Greek or the Renaissance Canon of Proportions, the whole design of the cross would be ruined. The big heads at Monasterboice may indeed have a reason, a geometrical reason now lost to us, like the logic which dictated the placing of the horizontal sword and the vertical sceptre in the Arrest panel. Indeed on some other panels of this cross the figure-compositions derive obviously from the patterns of earlier abstract ornament, ornamental bosses being replaced by human heads. Whether or not these heads and this panel treatment contain some mystic qualities as yet undiscovered by us is a question we must lay aside. It is sufficient to realise that here the sculptor created from the simplest of elements a satisfying unit. Why, one might ask, was Monasterboice selected for such a magnificent monument? Unlike



DETAIL FROM EAST FACE OF FLANN'S CROSS, SAID TO BE THE ABBOT AND FLANN PLACING THE FIRST STAKE FOR THE MONASTERY AT CLONMACNOIS.

Clonmacnois it had not become the burial place of important clans nor had it figured as an important monastic school. Whether it was violated in Flann Sinna's raid into Bregia recorded in the *Annals of Ulster* in 913 we cannot know. That there was a well-established Viking encampment at nearby Annagassan we know because as far back as 831 they had plundered Clonmacnois. Curiously, there is no record of Monasterboice having been plundered by the Vikings. The important personality of Abbot Muiredach, elected *tanist* of the abbot of Armagh in 890, high steward of the southern *Ui Neil* and according to the *Annals of Ulster* "the head counsel of all

the men of Bregia" may have been the reason for the erection of such an important and influential monument. As we have seen, the figured panel reached its highest level of achievement in Monasterboice. The existence of interesting contemporary figured crosses at the monasteries of Armagh, Kells, Clonmacnois, Durrow presents the challenge of a new style in cross-making.

But the mature art of the tenth-century carvers did not arise suddenly. Its roots must be sought in earlier groups or schools of carvers and particularly in Ossory and south Kildare. And one must remember that examples of the arts of illumination



and of metalwork, more portable of their nature than carving, must have been passed from one workshop to another.

The stimulation of one art by another is not infrequent in history. Its most pronounced example here in stone-carving appears in the two wheeled crosses at Ahenny in south Tipperary. In these the entire surface of the cross-shaft and wheel is enlivened with a light and shade pattern that recalls metalwork. The decoration of abstract geometrical pattern, continuous over all the faces of the cross, is deeply recessed by the frame of rounded moulding. While simpler mouldings are used on the south Cross at Clonmacnois, at Ahenny the emphasis is on the sharp, metallic clarity of the bine-twist.

But to me the most interesting aspect of the Ahenny group is the carved base-block of the North Cross. Unlike the subdivisions of such base-stones in the monuments of the tenth century, the whole stone has only four narrative panels; a scene with chariot, men on prancing horses and a dog on the chariot-pole; a man under a tree with birds and animals: seven clerics with crooks: a funeral procession. The meaning of these subjects and their inter-relation has not yet been satisfactorily

NORTH CROSS, AHENNY, CO. TIPPERARY.
WEST FACE.



ENIGMATICAL FUNERAL PROCESSION, NORTH CROSS, AHENNY, SOUTH SIDE. DETAIL OF BASE.

defined. Of the four, the funeral scene of the south panel is easily the most spectacular. It is, I think, the largest narrative panel on any of our crosses. It is unique, too, in its use of movement. Nowhere else except perhaps in the wrestling scenes of the Cross at Durrow and the Market Cross at Kells has definite movement been so well depicted. Here at Ahenny it is a processional movement that forms the entire design. On examining it one is amazed at the balance attained within such difficult movements. The composition tends to push forward to the figure carrying the ringed-cross and yet the whole design remains self-contained. If the reader looks carefully he will see with what extraordinary skill this was achieved. The vertical placing of the forward figures is offset by the horizontal mass of the horse with the dead figure on its back and finds an echo again in the single figure at the rear. It will be seen too how balancing is the vertical mass of the figure at the rear carrying the dead man's head, isolated sufficiently to give the desired weight to the whole design, yet still linked by his

hand to the horse's flanks. The forward group of figures, might easily become monotonous but the introduction of a smaller figure, which releases the space above the ringed processional cross, is a masterly way of giving a certain weightlessness to that area. Finally, the back and forth movement of the ravens pecking the corpse gives the final touch of equilibrium to the whole composition.

Much thought has been given to the subject-matter of this and the three other figure-panels on the base of the North Cross at Ahenny. Some have been tempted to see in the scene the burial of a king-bishop of Cashel, Cormac MacCullinan, the author of Cormac's *Glossary*, of the *Psalter of Cashel*, and of *Leabhar na gCeart* (the Book of Rights). Cormac fell at the battle of Bealach Moon near Muine Beg in Carlow in 908. To Flann Sinna the High King, who had come to the aid of the Leinster forces, a soldier brought the gory head of Cormac so that as victor he might, according to a barbarous practice of war, place it under his knee. Keating tells us that Flann instead took the head reverently



CROSS OF MOONE

Top Left

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT, DETAIL OF BASE
(SOUTH SIDE), CROSS OF MOONE, CO. KILDARE.

Bottom Left

THE TWELVE APOSTLES, DETAIL (WEST FACE)
CROSS OF MOONE, CO. KILDARE.

in his hand, kissed it and had his soldiers seek out the body and return both to Disert Diarmuida where the holy king-bishop had been a monk. Archaeologists, however, seem agreed on stylistic grounds that the Ahenny cross predates this event by almost two hundred years. So the meaning of the figure-carving on this cross baffles us. It may symbolize aspects of Christian teaching. More baffling still is the fact that a master capable of executing such a distinguished figure-composition should have left us only this single example of his skill. We might assume that such an artist would have received his training in the neighbourhood at Kilkieran or at Kilcash or Tibberaghny but of the origins of the skill he exercised here of his harmonious arrangement of figures there remains no clue in trial pieces or in later work.

A different but also a unique cross is the work of the great master-sculptor of Moone. This monastery in the southern portion of Kildare county is known in Irish as Maon Cholmchille, Colmcille's bogland. Here some time in the ninth century the greatest of the masters of the granite cross appeared. His cross is unlike any other existing High Cross in proportions and in the treatment of subject-matter. Its clear geometric lines contrast strongly with the rounded and softer forms of the millstone grit crosses of the central plain, though this latter may have been brought about in part by the gradual weathering and softening of the sandstone surfaces.

Beyond the reach of weathering, however, is the relief system adopted in the Apostles panel of the Moone Cross. This relief system more than any other factor is to my mind responsible for the sheer joy in shape-simplicity that we get from the base of this cross. The whole surface of the foreground relief plane is retained by keeping the little squares that serve for the bodies of the twelve apostles unrounded

and unmoulded. The sculptor here has retained the original face of the diestone, which, unlike the swollen base stones of the tenth-century sandstone monuments, rises in flat surfaces from the mound. These flat surfaces are only broken vertically by incised cuts between the bodies and by small recessed horizontal areas to show the tiny feet. The heads alone show the only suggestion of modelling and this amounts to little more than incised lines for hair, eyes, nose and mouth. Treatment is similar in the other panels of this remarkable carving. The most popular of its panels, the miracles of the loaves and fishes, show the five loaves as simple flat discs. This is again seen in the temptation of Saint Anthony and even in the much publicised flight into Egypt panel.

The great simplicity achieved in the panels of this cross has often been attributed to the difficulty of working the granite of the district. Material must necessarily influence the carver's design. No doubt the softer grit-stones tempt him to chisel corners and to model surfaces. Then the very nature of the granite lends itself less easily to detail. It is therefore quite possible that the sculptor discovered when drawing in or incising his preparatory v-cuts on the harder material, the immense simplicity attainable in this material with the least possible cutting. This economy of means is a characteristic of all great art. Much of this economy is visible in neighbouring granite crosses at Old Kilcullen and Disert Diarmuida. While we may assume that the Master of the Moone Cross had an imitator in the carver of the base of the South Cross at Castledermot, an imitator who did not quite understand the quality of his spatial arrangement, one feels that the beauty and originality of some of the cross panels at Old Kilcullen and at Castledermot suggests a school of important carvers in this granite area.

And here one may ask where did these master-sculptors go, these men who not

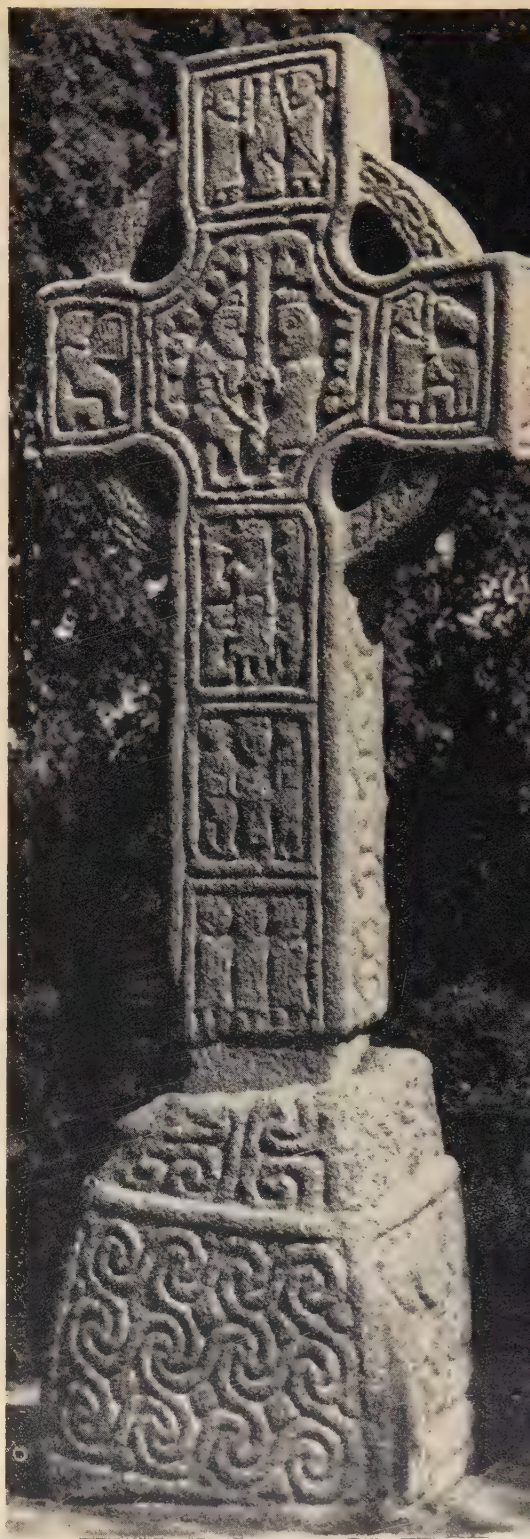


(DETAIL) PANEL, EAST FACE, NORTH CROSS, AHENNY.



(DETAIL) PANEL, EAST FACE, NORTH CROSS AHENNY.

only knew the appropriate handling of their materials but who also evoked great design-principles with a charm and a seeming abandon that has fascinated the younger art workers of today? Were they, perhaps, absorbed into the development towards the tenth-century Scripture Crosses? Carvers have, until very recent times tended to "follow stone", to move to centres of new work or newly opened quarries. Perhaps when monasteries such as Moone ceased to be important they may have turned their skills to materials other than the beautiful granite in which they had been trained. And we can never know what important works of art have been lost or destroyed. Even after Petrie and Macalister had listed all the visible grave slabs of Clonmacnois, a gravedigger in recent times uncovered a slab which outshone them all in elegance of execution and in balance of design: a monument to a man who may have been one of the Clonmacnois school of carvers, Tuathal the wright, *Tuathal saer*. This is now assumed to belong to the eleventh or twelfth century. In basic design it shows the continuous evolution from the slabs of the eighth century. While such an art might survive in smaller grave-slabs, there is a gap in major monuments. The end of the interim of peace from the Viking attacks came in 913. These new disturbances were to last up to 1014.



CASTLEDERMOT, CO. KILDARE. NORTH CROSS, WEST FACE.



CROSS AT DYSERT O'DEA, CO. CLARE, EAST FACE.

A remarkable plastic change takes place in the next stage of Irish High Cross sculpture, in the early twelfth century. The intervening period that began with the resumption of the Viking wars may be responsible for the apparent absence of the new and original design that had marked the earlier work. It is possible that many of the carvers, during the troubled century that followed 914, left to find work on the new monuments of a Europe preparing the Romanesque. The difficulty of dating work of the following centuries makes more difficult the task of finding a link between the carvers of Flann's reign, say, and those of the later middle ages. This gap may amount to little more than the manneristic interval that usually follows the maturity of an art form. However, when we can again begin to date our crosses, their appearance has changed considerably. Against the traditional wheeled arrangement figures carved half-round stand out, giving the whole monument a more complex aspect. The twelfth-century grit crosses of Tuam and Roscrea and the limestone monuments of Kilfenora and Dysert O'Dea suggest a different plastic vision. The projections of figures in fairly strong relief make for a more complex plan. At Dysert O'Dea the sculptor, by a judicious use of two figures on the western face, that of a draped Crucified figure and an abbot—Saint Tola—help to retain the simplicity of the original face of the stone. On the eastern face of the cathedral cross at Kilfenora, while the figure is in the new scale of small life-size, the other carved portions of the shaft-face are kept on a similar level of projection, thereby assuring the unity of the whole. In the much worn grit cross at Roscrea, the feeling of relief has become somewhat irregular, with figures projecting on the sides of shaft and main surface. However, like the great cross in the Square at Tuam, its present condition makes it difficult to visualise this work in its original integrity.



SOUTH SIDE OF THE DYSSERT O'DEA CROSS.



CROSS ON ROCK OF CASHEL, CO. TIPPERARY, EAST FACE.

At a first glance it would appear as though the artist was committing the Romanesque porch-figure system to the traditional wheeled cross shape. At Roscrea the nearby Romanesque porch with its single figure would suggest mutual influence.

It was at Cashel, however, that the highest achievement of twelfth-century cross-making was reached. Here a new form of cross design was evolved, a form that was at once traditional in its deeper measures and receptive of the new figure-sculpture of the twelfth century. On the mound traditionally associated with the inauguration of the Munster kings, this monument was constructed. It is much worn and a considerable portion has been broken off. The faces of the figures too on the east and west sides have been mutilated. Enough remain to tell us how wonderfully these sculptors had designed this new and daring monument. Of the tenth-century wheeled formation there remained only the roundels of the lights. Stone crutches replace the buttressing wheel-arches that supported the transom in the older art form. Except for the massive base-stone there is little to remind one of the general shape of a High Cross. This die-stone, too, though much worn, shows traces of a decoration in low relief, of a form not met with in previous works. Gone are the old hunting scenes, the groupings of animals and centaurs and in their place is simple abstract ornament. On the west a Greek type key pattern, on the south a decorative zoöomorphic interlaced pattern, similar to those in very low relief on the crosses of Dysert O'Dea and Tuam. Here, however, unlike these monuments, there is no attempt to break the simplicity of the massive base form with projecting small figure groupings. This feeling for the massive, full-faced truncated pyramid seems to hark back to the great bases of Clonmacnois, Monasterboice and of the Kells Market Cross.

The central shaft of the Cashel Cross

carries what must have been the highest plastic achievement in sculpture of the twelfth century, the integration of two full-length figures with the whole mass-design. To the west the fully-clothed figure of Christ with outstretched arms and robe girdled at the waist; to the east a noble figure wearing a chasuble and carrying in his hand a bishop's crook, complete the cross form of the upper portion of the monument. The figures stand on corbelled animal heads, reminding one of the figures on a transition or very early Gothic porch sculpture of the Continent. In a cross or raking light at Cashel it is possible to trace the spiral curving lines that were the decorative treatment of portal figure-drapery in twelfth-century continental work. The great wooden cross at Lucca has been suggested as a prototype for this draped figure of Christ. Whatever the influences may have been on sculptors working in Cashel in the twelfth century, the masters who carved this monument from the local stone of the Drumbane sandstone district invented their own distinctive design. There were, of course, draped rood figures in pre-Norman England but no complete and complex unit as daring as this.

The churches that were associated with twelfth-century Cashel and its kings, Lismore and Cork, have been obliterated. Mocuda's shrine was spoiled by Boyle, the first Earl of Cork, as also Saint Finbarr's foundation by over-building in later centuries. We know that these places were centres of much activity in the Church reform of the twelfth century and it is fair to suppose that the arts naturally reflected the change. Salvaged from the wreck of conquest are pieces of metalwork from these workshops, like the Lismore crozier and the shrine of the hand of Saint Lachtain, both now in the National Museum. In them we see the echoes of a wider art production, including stone sculpture and perhaps painting.

Lachtain's hand-shrine, associated with the O'Healy's of Donaghmore in County Cork, may in its elegance and simplicity serve as an indication of the character of Irish art in the twelfth century. The design is marked by extreme reticence and by geometrical control. It was made to enclose the relic of the sixth-century patron of Kilnamatra in Cork and of Freshford in Kilkenny. It was the gift of the Munster kings, including Cormac MacCarthy, then *rig-domna* or heir to the throne and was executed probably about 1118. When Cormac succeeded his brother in 1126 he set about building the well-known Cormac's Chapel on the Rock of Cashel. We do not know whether this new style of building, (since called Hiberno-Romanesque) was already widely in use in Ireland but during the half-century or more that followed the consecration of the Cashel chapel in 1134, it dominates church-building. On its portals and chancel the sculptors of the twelfth century found a new outlet.

The space previously offered to the carver of wheeled crosses and door lintels is now extended to chancel piers and stepped arch recessions. In the grey-blue limestone of County Clare, in the grits of the north-west and the midlands and in the granite of the Leinster mountains, carvers worked with the same understanding of the possibilities of the various media as did their predecessors of the eighth and tenth centuries.

How joyously the sculptors revelled in the possibilities of the soft grits is evident in what to many has become the symbol of the Irish Romanesque achievement in carving, the great portal of the cathedral that was the burial place of the founder, Brendan the Navigator, at Clonfert, County Galway. Here facing the west in the full raking light of a southern sun we see the carver enjoying his over-all sense of vibrating light and shade even as the sculptor of the Kells Cross of Patrick and



DOORWAY, SAINT BRENDAN'S CATHEDRAL, CLONFERT, CO. GALWAY.



THE ARCHES THAT REMAIN OF THE "NUNS" CHURCH, AT CLONMACNOIS.

Columba enlivened it with dancing shapes and flowing forms, back in the ninth century. Here at Clonfert-Bhréannáin the moulded forms on recessed arches are cut through, perforated to heighten their effect of vibrant light and shade. In Dervogilla's Church (The Nuns' Church) at Clonmacnois, the sharp, tooth-like projections of the massive chancel arch remind one again how complete was the artist's conception of the whole architectural arrangement. To-day these projections, these sharply cut facets strike us as hard in the clear light of the midday sun but one does not find it difficult to realise how well the sculptor knew that this would diminish in a dimly-lit interior of a roofed nave. The sunlight to-day however enable us to enjoy the superb craftsmanship and the magnificent plastic unity of the whole arrangement. We see how plane is set against plane, not primarily to accentuate the light and shade effect but to engender a rhythmic movement over the entire surface. How controlled and strong this arrangement is can be seen in the animal heads that hold the outer half-round mould-

ing that forms one of the voussoir arcs. In these heads alone, with their deliberate formalization, a new school of sculpture can be recognized. Its influence was still to be felt even in the newer architectural movement of the period of the foundation of the first Irish Cistercian monasteries after 1140. The Cistercian houses at Ballynaglass, Boyle, Jerpoint show, for a time, this influence. The quarries from which much of the grit-stone used for carving was raised would continue to be used for more than a century afterwards but the spirit that animated the workers gradually ceases to be an inspiration. Nowhere in post-Norman carving is our interest in relief sculpture held as it is before the figure-carvings on the piers at Killeel or in the panels at Freshford.

Here in these Dublin and Kilkenny carvings, the music of an earlier art lingers. Looking at them one recalls the high moments of the tenth century when, as Doctor Francoise Henry so beautifully puts it, monuments "like the crosses of Kells and Monasterboice appear as a magnificent preface to medieval sculpture."



CARVED DETAIL CAPITAL, KILFENORA CATHEDRAL, CO. CLARE.

CARVED DETAIL FROM PORTAL SAINT BRENDAN'S CATHEDRAL, CLONFERT, CO. GALWAY.





OF SS. PATRICK AND COLUMBA, (CROSS OF THE TOWER),
KELLS, CO. MEATH. EAST FACE



CROSS OF SS. PATRICK AND COLUMBA, (CROSS OF THE TOWER)
KELLS, CO. MEATH. WEST FACE.



CASTLEDERMOT, CO. KILDARE. SOUTH CROSS, WEST FACE.



NORTH CROSS, AHENNY, CO. TIPPERARY.
EAST FACE.



CROSS OF MUIREDACH,
DAVID AND GOLIATH,
DETAIL PANEL
MONASTERBOICE.



DETAIL FROM BASE OF MARKET
CROSS, KELS, EAST FACE.



SOUTH CROSS, AHENNY, CO. TIPPERARY
EAST FACE.



HIGH CROSS, DURROW, CO. OFFALY. WEST FACE.

THE ART OF EARLY IRISH ILLUMINATION

By

ETIENNE RYNNE

EARLY Irish manuscripts are deservedly renowned for their art, one of them, the *Book of Kells*, being, perhaps, the best-known book in the whole world. The *Book of Kells* must not be thought of as a unique phenomenon, isolated among the world's early manuscripts, but, rather, as the finest example in a whole series of illuminated manuscripts, all of which are either directly or indirectly associated with early Christian Ireland. Artistically, the *Book of Kells* is deservedly placed on the apex of a very high pinnacle, but we must never forget that it has that place of esteem only as a result of the work of generations of artists, each of whom contributed something towards its achievement. Furthermore, although it could be interpreted as the culmination of years of innovation, change, and conservation in Irish art, its achievement did not mark the termination of such work; many finely illuminated manuscripts emanated from Irish *scriptoria* during the centuries following. All these illuminated manuscripts are decorated in an art-style which is popularly called "Celtic", a term which is somewhat inaccurate if

taken literally but which can be acceptable if it is the interpretation rather than the content which is in question. It is this long-lived art-style which we are going to examine here, following its progression from its beginning in the late sixth century to the end of the Viking period.

Thanks to the fact that the Roman legions never reached Ireland, this country was truly Celtic, both in fact and in spirit, when Christianity was introduced during the fifth century. The Irish, therefore, were the last truly Celtic people who remained completely independent, and were thus very different from all others. This is the fundamental reason why the art found in our early illuminated manuscripts is so very different from that in other European, Asian, and North African manuscripts of approximately the same date.

The Celts were a people who spread over most of Europe during the last five centuries before the birth of Christ. They are identifiable not only by their language, political and social customs, weapons, tools, dress, and other artifacts, but above all by their art. This art seems to have developed

in the Celtic homeland, somewhere north and north-west of the Alps. Its basis was, of course, the mainly geometric, abstract art already found among the proto-Celtic tribes in the area. This proto-Celtic art is not very inspiring and is of such a simple, rather primitive type that it can hardly be rightly called an art-style. It differs little in general feeling and execution from the non-representational art of many primitive peoples of all ages and areas. Nonetheless, it did provide the Celtic artists with something to build on.

Racial traits have a way of surviving all sorts of attempts to curb them, and those of the early Celts on the Continent can be found among the Irish Celts of the early historic period, just as they often come to the surface among the present-day Irish, Scots, Manx, Welsh, Cornish and Breton peoples. One of these Celtic traits is a love of drink, and it has been said that Celtic art largely owes its origin to Celtic thirst. This is not to suggest that Celtic art derives from the drunken hallucinations of Celtic craftsmen, but merely to indicate the main source of inspiration which provided the impetus to the development of their primitive geometric art: the decoration on the bronze vessels in which the "precious" liquid was imported from the Mediterranean world. These vessels were often decorated with Graeco-Etruscan *motifs* which appealed to the Celtic artist. However, the appeal was a qualified one and another characteristic Celtic trait came to the fore, that of adaptation of a foreign idea rather than its adoption. The willingness to adapt rather than adopt, to absorb rather than be absorbed, is a characteristic which lasted all through the history of the Celts and one which is a primary feature of early Irish illumination.

Other non-Celtic elements, besides those of the Classical Mediterranean world, which played a part in the evolution and development of early Celtic art, include *motifs* derived from Scythian and Eastern

art-styles. These *motifs*, too, were adapted and absorbed into the Celtic repertoire, and by the mid-fifth century B.C. the Celts possessed what has been termed "the first conscious art-style to be created in Europe north of the Alps".

Celtic art developed over the centuries, and many recognisable phases and local styles can be identified, but throughout, several characteristic features always remain present.

It is curvilinear rather than rectilinear, asymmetrical yet balanced, sometimes geometric yet not rigidly so, abstract yet sometimes semi-representational, over-indulgent yet controlled, barbaric yet sophisticated, ever willing to absorb new *motifs* and ideas yet never willing merely to copy them. There is a general tendency to geometrize what is zoöomorphic, and to zoömorphize what is geometric: bosses and swirling curves often give the impression of a human or animal face peering out of the ornament, and one can seldom be certain whether the artist has deliberately transformed the face into the design or *vice versa*. There is an air of mystery about it all, and it is clear that the Classical ideal of almost photographic and life-like reproduction was anathema to the Celt. To the Celts, the overall design or pattern was of primary importance. In general terms, the Celt decorated a surface, that is, ornamented what was already present so as to make it more pleasing. Celtic art, though not always merely decorative, is seldom descriptive—it is truly an art for Art's sake.

This was the art which existed in Ireland when Christianity arrived. The early missionaries, Saint Patrick and others, were concerned with spreading the Gospel and not with overthrowing the existing culture, with the result the christianization of Ireland did not alter excessively the Celtic character of the people nor, of course, their approach to art. Rather, once the new religion became established, the Church acted as a patron of the arts, providing the

artists with fresh inspiration and introducing them to new ideas and techniques.

Though possessed of immense learning and of an oral literature, formidable in quantity as well as quality, the Celts never possessed the knowledge of writing and, in consequence, knew nothing of books. Books were, however, almost a *sine qua non* of Christianity, and we can be certain that even the first missionaries to Ireland brought books with them. The concept of the written word was soon appreciated by the Irish, particularly amongst those converted to Christianity, and before long books were being written in the Irish monasteries. None of these very early books remain today, but by comparison with the fifth-century Latin manuscripts known from Gaul and Italy, undoubtedly similar to those brought to Ireland by the early missionaries, it seems reasonable to suppose that they were not very elaborately ornamented. Some of them may have had enlarged and sometimes slightly decorative letters at the beginning of important paragraphs, but that would probably be all.

The early Irish manuscripts were written on vellum, specially prepared from calfskin, and not on parchment as is popularly believed. The Irish script is, naturally, not indigenous, but is based on a combination of various elements from several ancient scripts. It is found in two main varieties, a majuscule and a minuscule script (i.e. upper case and lower case respectively). An artistic script, it has lasted with little change right down to the present day.

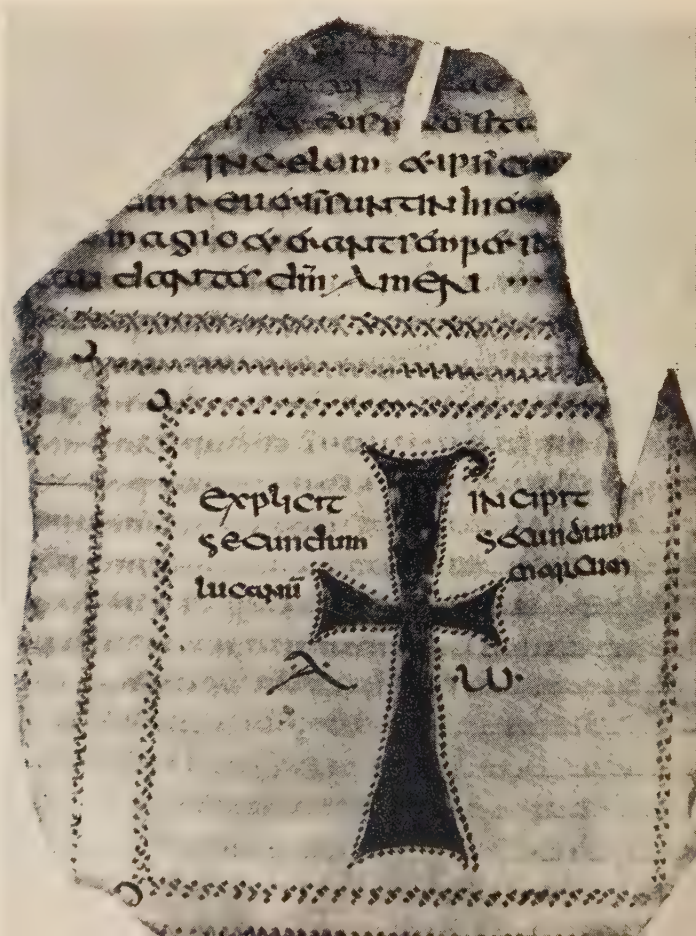
The earliest known Irish manuscript showing any sign of illumination is undoubtedly the *Cathach* (See page 127). This book, containing sixty-four psalms in Latin, is now preserved in the Royal Irish Academy. Tradition links it with Saint Columcille, holding that it is the very book which he copied illegally and which resulted in the Battle of Cúl Dréimhne and his subsequent exile to Iona in A.D. 563. The story is well-known. Saint Columcille, on

a visit to his friend Saint Finnian of Moville, surreptitiously copied a precious book belonging to that saint who on discovering the breach of what we should now call copyright—and, indeed, of trust and friendship—demanded the copy. Columcille refused to hand it over and the matter was brought before Diarmuid, the High King of Ireland, who is reported to have made the famous, if facile, judgement, “to every cow its calf”. Columcille rebelled against the judgement, and mustering his people, the Cinéal Conaill, and others to his aid, he defeated the High King in a bloody battle at Cúl Dréimhne. Repentance, and judgement by his peers, followed, and Columcille chose to leave the land of his birth to expiate the crime of causing so many deaths by working among, and converting, the heathen Scots. The *Cathach*, as we know it today, may well be the book in question as palaeographically there is nothing against such an early date for it. Furthermore, as Doctor Françoise Henry has pointed out, the text is a fairly good recension of the translation of the psalter made by Saint Jerome, a version which would at the time have been a novelty to Ireland and which would, therefore, account for Columcille’s anxiety to copy it—the saint’s acquaintance with the pre-Jerome version and the necessity for haste in copying the new version would, perhaps, account for any impurities to be found in the text of the *Cathach*. Furthermore, we are told that Saint Finnian is supposed to have gone to Rome and to have returned with “the complete Gospels”, which would support the theory that the tradition associated with the *Cathach* may be based on fact.

If, in fact, the *Cathach* is the book so hastily copied by Saint Columcille, then the saint was really the first-class scribe which he is thought to have been. The script, Irish majuscule, is beautiful and the decorated initial letters at the beginning of each psalm are often superlative in design though simple and sparsely coloured. The



*Traditional Symbol of Saint John, an eagle—
Book of Armagh.*



Page from Codex Usserianus Primus, which has a pre-Vulgate text and is of uncertain origin, but may be of seventh century.

colours employed, apart from the dark brown of the letters themselves, are red and yellow. The relatively large and decorative initial letters are sometimes surrounded by vermillion dots, and are followed by letters diminishing in size until the normal letter-size is reached, the former feature being perhaps, though not necessarily, of Coptic origin and the latter an original Irish contribution to manuscript illumination, both features are characteristic of later Irish illumination. Spirals, scrolls, and swelling lines bisected by a pointed oval (the so-called "trumpet" *motif*), all basically Celtic *motifs*, are found in the *Cathach*, while small equal-armed crosses, mounted on handle-like appendages, and animal heads make up the rest of its decoration.

The real importance of the *Cathach* is that it is an undoubtedly Irish manuscript, showing that manuscript illumination was being practised in Ireland before contacts with Continental Europe became really close and well before the development of any Northumbrian *scriptorium*.

Saint Columcille travelled to Iona in 563, inaugurating the great Irish missionary work in Scotland and northern England. Less than thirty years afterwards Saint Columbanus departed from Bangor, Co. Down, to begin missionary work on the Continent, travelling through France, Germany, Switzerland and northern Italy. The last and most famous monastery founded by Saint Columbanus was that at Bobbio in northern Italy, and it is the library of this monastery which provides us with most of the early seventh-century manuscripts illuminated in the Irish tradition.

An exception may be the fragmentary manuscript now in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, which is known as the *Codex Usserianus Primus*. This manuscript has an early pre-Vulgate text and is written in a script which closely resembles the similarly dated (early seventh century) Bobbio manuscripts. However, its history

is unknown and whether it originated in the Bobbio *scriptorium* or in a contemporary Irish one is uncertain. The most notable decorative feature is a large square panel containing a large red cross of Chi-Rho type which is outlined and ornamented with black dots and flanked by the Alpha and Omega. A good parallel for this cross with the Alpha and Omega is to be found on a slab at Loher, Co. Kerry, but parallels can also be found in some early north Italian manuscripts. This large panel containing the cross is important in the story of Irish illumination in that it provides evidence of a branch of the art other than initial letters, perhaps even the beginning of the so-called "carpet pages" of pure ornament which are to be found in later illuminated manuscripts.

Some of the early Bobbio manuscripts, now preserved in the Ambrosian Library, Milan, are dateable to the period immediately following the death of Saint Columbanus in 615, one in particular, Ms. S. 45, sup., seemingly having belonged to Atalanus, the immediate successor of Columbanus as abbot of the monastery. Some of this manuscript is written and decorated in the Irish manner, as also is the contemporaneous Ms. D. 23. sup., likewise in the Ambrosian Library. The latter manuscript has the large initial letters surrounded by dots, and the interesting feature of groups of three dots also occurs, a feature which is found in later Irish manuscripts. It also has an introductory page which is given over entirely to rather elementary ornament—a simple type of "carpet-page".

The Bobbio manuscripts possess some apparently oriental features, for example the use of dots which, as already mentioned, may be of Coptic origin, and it would appear probable that Bobbio may well have acted as a sort of meeting place between the eastern and the western worlds of Christendom. Ireland, however, appears perhaps to have had some direct contact with the Near East, the records speaking of Egyptians,

Armenians and "Romani" (to be identified as Byzantines) visiting Irish monasteries, while sixth-century Mediterranean pottery found in southern Ireland may indicate direct contacts with that area. Whether the contacts were direct or indirect is not of great importance, the fact of the matter being that oriental influence seems to be discernable in many of the characteristic features of subsequent Irish illumination.

While monasteries with *scriptoria* were being established on the Continent by Saint Columbanus and his colleagues, we must not forget that in Scotland and in northern England the Columban Mission, working from Iona, was busy establishing many fine monasteries, and that in the best Columban tradition one of their more important features was the *scriptorium*. Undoubtedly the most important and best-known foundation which was set up from Iona was on the small island of Lindisfarne, in Northumbria, off the north-east coast of England. The monastery, founded in 635 by a monk from Iona, Saint Aidan, had, of course, a *scriptorium*, one which later was to produce one of the three really great illuminated manuscripts of the so-called "Celtic" art-style. Such a work as the *Book of Lindisfarne* could not have been produced without a long tradition behind it, and it seems clear that the *scriptoria* in Northumbria and Scotland must have been working on illumination almost from the moment of their foundation, no doubt in continual fraternal contact with Iona and related Irish monasteries, particularly with those working under the Columban rule such as Derry, Durrow, Swords, Drumcliff. Such undoubted contact across the Irish Sea would readily account for the presence of many Anglo-Saxon elements in the Irish art of the period, elements which can not all be explained away by suggesting that the objects so ornamented were actually imported from Northumbria and elsewhere in England.

Approaching the middle of the sixth

century A.D., we have, therefore, all the makings of a revitalised art-style in Ireland. There is an active school of artists, not only producing fine metal-work but also actively engaged in producing illuminated manuscripts; there is a strong, if rather tired, Celtic artistic basis waiting expectantly to be revived and re-inspired; there are new artistic and technological ideas arriving from the Near East and from Continental Europe, and, perhaps most important, very close contacts with related schools of art in Scotland and northern England resulting in a continual stimulating interchange of ideas. The material was present, the stimulation was there, and all that was needed was a little extra patience, a lot of courage and a few strokes of genius, to combine them and produce a type of art which would spark off one of the greatest phases in the history of art which the world has ever known.

Where exactly the great burst forward was made is a much-argued point, many opting for Northumbria, others for Ireland, and yet others attempting to find a way out by suggesting that it might have been in Scotland, or more particularly, in Iona. The evidence is stronger for Northumbria and Ireland than for Scotland, but one thing seems fairly clear; the first break seems to have been made by a Columban monastery. Indeed, each of the most famous illuminated books in the so-called "Celtic" art-style is associated with a famous Columban foundation, namely, with Durrow, Lindisfarne and Kells.

The *Book of Durrow*, now preserved in the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, is unquestionably the glory of this seventh-century amalgamation of art-elements. Its known association with Durrow, Co. Offaly, goes back almost a thousand years and there seems to be no good reason to believe that it was not associated with that monastery for considerably longer, though whether it was illuminated there or in Northumbria or, perhaps equally probable,

in Derry, is still an open question. It is generally dated some time between 650 and 680, which one might perhaps suggest, argues strongly in favour of an Irish rather than a Northumbrian origin, the Irish *scriptoria* having had the benefit of a long tradition behind them while the British *scriptoria* would have still been virtually in their infancy almost entirely dependent on Irish teachers equipped with Irish exemplars. A further argument in favour of the *Book of Durrow's* being of Irish origin is that it appears to be the climax of an art-style which did not lead on to, nor was a phase of the subsequent art-styles of manuscript illumination which seem to have mainly originated from Lindisfarne and other Northumbrian monasteries.

The *Book of Durrow* is an almost complete book of 248 leaves, containing the text of the four *Gospels* plus some introductory matter. It is written in Irish majuscule and is highly illuminated. The colours used are orange-red, yellow, and moss-green, made from red lead, orpiment, and verdigris respectively; the script and outlines of the ornament are in deep-coloured black-brown ink.

The *Book of Durrow* opens with three ornamental pages, the first showing a great double-armed cross, set against a background of interlace. Coptic books of a slightly later date (eighth, ninth and tenth centuries) open in a somewhat similar manner, and also use the same colours, red, yellow and green, as does the *Book of Durrow*. Coptic parallels can also be found for the use of "carpet-pages" as in the *Book of Durrow* and other Irish illuminated manuscripts. These are whole pages covered with ornament, not an integral part of the text, nor illustrations relative to it, nor even symbolic in any way—they are purely decorative, an extra embellishment, a gratuitous bonus. Such "carpet-pages" are only known from illuminated manuscripts of the Irish (including Northumbrian, of course) schools and from eighth-century

and later Coptic and Syrian manuscripts. The use of a bordered, board-ribbon interlace of relatively simple type, often with sharp or squared angles, such as is found in the *Book of Durrow*, can also be paralleled in the Near East, but in this case we need not confine our search for parallels to the manuscripts, which are all later than the Irish ones, but can legitimately look to the earlier textiles and icons for prototypes. There are also other features found in early Irish illumination, though not necessarily in the *Book of Durrow*, for which an oriental origin has often been suggested. These include the manner in which the Eusebian *Canon Tables* (a tabulated "index" of the Gospels, showing which verses of each Gospel can be correlated with the others) are set out in arcades, one frame for each Gospel, the occurrence of the inhabited vine-scroll, and the processions of birds.

Whether or not Coptic influence can be invoked for all the above features has still not been cleared up. The main problem lies in the absence of illuminated Eastern manuscripts ante-dating the earlier examples from the Irish schools, but the presence of such similarities can hardly be fortuitous. The possibility of some of these features originating in Ireland and being adopted by some Eastern schools has been hinted at, but such an event seems most unlikely. Likewise, the possibility that some of the features may owe their origin to a third school of art which provided the prototypes for both the Irish and Eastern examples, e.g. Roman—Sub-Roman—Coptic, and Roman—Sub-Roman—Irish. However, to place too much stress on such theories would be unwarranted on the present evidence. Until a better alternative is suggested and shown to be reasonably probable, we are forced to accept the quite plausible hypothesis of Eastern influence on early Irish Christian art.

The "carpet-pages" of the *Book of Durrow* are particularly interesting in the variety of the ornament they display. That



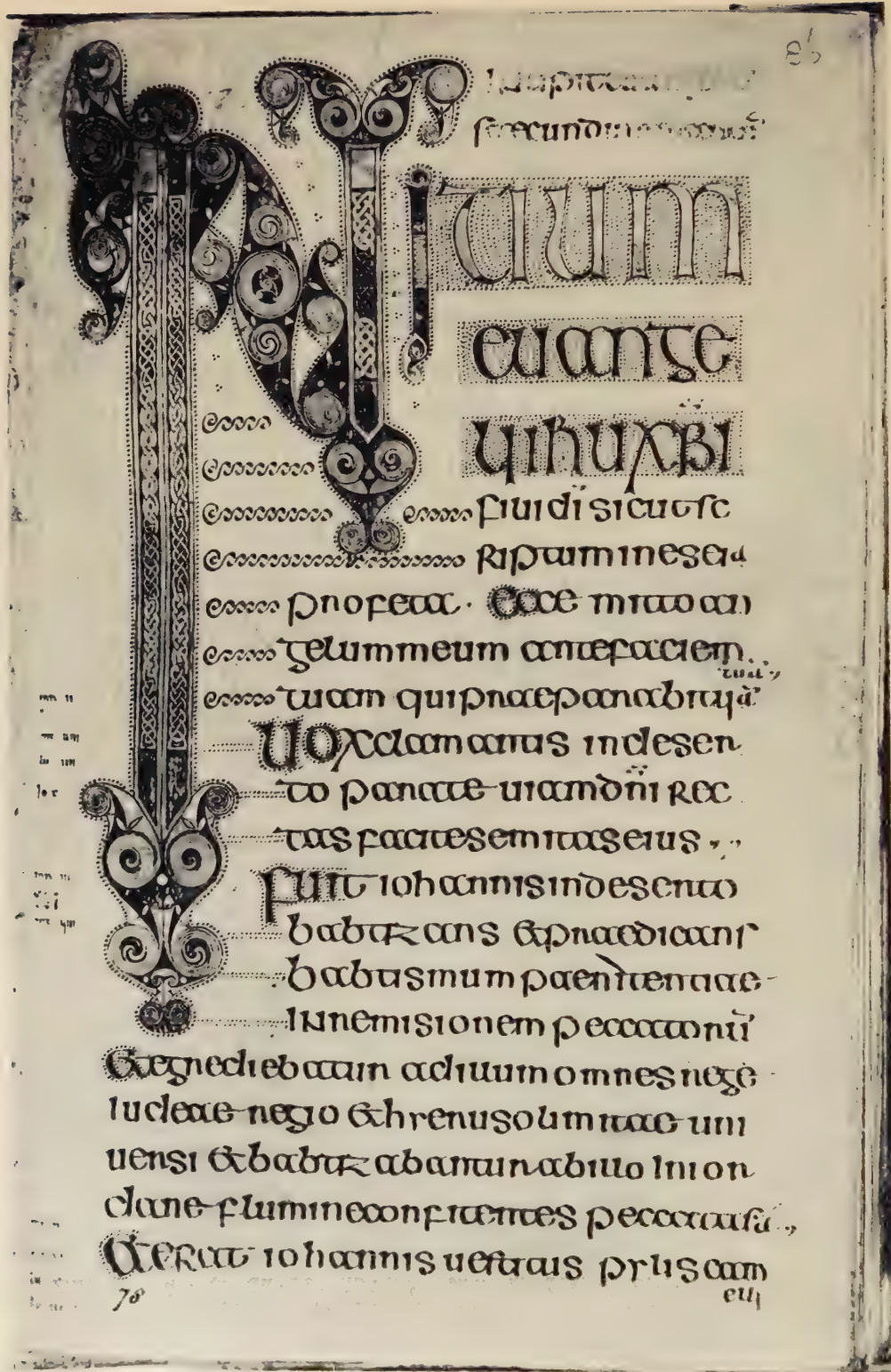
Page of Spirals—Book of Durrow

generally referred to as the Page of Spirals is noteworthy for the frame of broad-ribbon interlace and the central area filled with wonderful, swirling spiral patterns. The interlace is a new *motif* which the Celtic artist had not yet made his own—it is treated rather pedantically and is uninspired. As if appreciating this, the artist has clearly kept it separate from the marvellously involved and brilliantly inspired spiral decorations which are obviously a development from the earlier Celtic curvilinear *motifs* which he had inherited from his own background. He clearly feels quite at home with the curvilinear Celtic ornament, the master of all its intricacies, but when faced with producing decoration in the unfamiliar interlaced style he equally clearly finds himself somewhat at a loss and his heart does not seem to be in it.

A similar ability with, and personal involvement in, curvilinear Celtic-derived ornament and a seeming lack of understanding and real interest in interlace is apparent in the page giving the beginning of Saint Mark's *Gospel*. Here, as elsewhere, the spirals are ornate and full of life, while the interlaced plaitwork is pedestrian, almost banal. The Celtic characteristic of transforming geometric patterns into zoömorphs (animal designs) appears once again, the whirling, linked spirals at the bottom of the conjoined IN (at the beginning of INITIUM) having a fleeting resemblance to an animal's head, the uppermost spirals representing the ears, the large enclosed ones representing the eyes, below these the large pair of spirals resembling outwardly flaring nostrils, and the small spirals extending from the bottom perhaps intended as the animal's curling tongue. Such a resemblance might appear unimaginative to some, but for anyone who knows the earlier Celtic work, including the zoöomorphic terminals of the slightly earlier penannular ring-brooches, the acceptance of a zoömorph at the bottom

of the initials will be easy; for those still inclined to doubt, the animal-head in the corner of the frame around the beginning of Saint Matthew's *Gospel* in the *Book of Mac Regol*, though about a century and a quarter later in date, should provide the necessary key.

Quite apart from the extensive use of ribbon interlace, there are other elements to be found in the *Book of Durrow* which are new to the repertoire of the Irish artist. One of these is an attempt at representational art resulting in the pseudo-representational Evangelical symbols. The Lion—Saint Mark, the calf—Saint Luke, the eagle—Saint John, and the man—Saint Matthew, are all recognisable as such, but only just. Each of these symbols is represented on a plain background, within a rectangular frame filled with broad-ribbon interlace. These symbols are not in themselves works of art and, indeed, they seem to make no pretence at being anything other than obligatory symbols. The artist, with his Celtic background which abhorred all representational art in the Classical style, does not seem to have been able to bring himself to produce naturalistic animals and seems to have almost deliberately represented them as designs of the sort which might almost be termed heraldic. The Matthew symbol illustrates the problem excellently: the head and feet are shown reasonably naturalistically, but the rest of the body is depicted as a featureless trapezoidal shape, narrower and rounded at the top, the whole covered with small squares, not all of the same colour and design, and with a narrow strip of simple interlace reaching from the top almost to the bottom. There is no trace of arms or other anatomical details. It seems possible to interpret it as a rather clever way of avoiding the onus of having to depict the human body by showing it as if covered by a calf-length, sleeveless, multi-coloured cloak; one might even suggest that it represents a sort of chausable, taking the line of interlace as



Beginning of Saint Mark's Gospel, Book of Durrow.

representing a laced-up opening which does not extend to the bottom, which in turn indicates that the vestment would be worn by passing it over the wearer's head and not by wrapping it around the shoulders. A further observation might be made concerning this figure, namely that it gives the appearance of being based on a metal prototype. The head is drawn as if the face protrudes from the page in relief with the hair incised on a flat background, and the cloaked body is drawn as if it was a framed, flat field of ornament (the chequered pattern has often been compared with millefiori—small squares of multi-coloured glass which are often found set closely together), and the feet are drawn in profile as if incised on a flat surface. The well-known bronze mounting from Saint John's Point, Rinnagan, near Athlone, with its low relief face, flat robe (with a line of interlace down its centre), and feet incised on a flat surface, provides us with a useful comparison and may, indeed, be almost contemporary with the *Book of Durrow*.

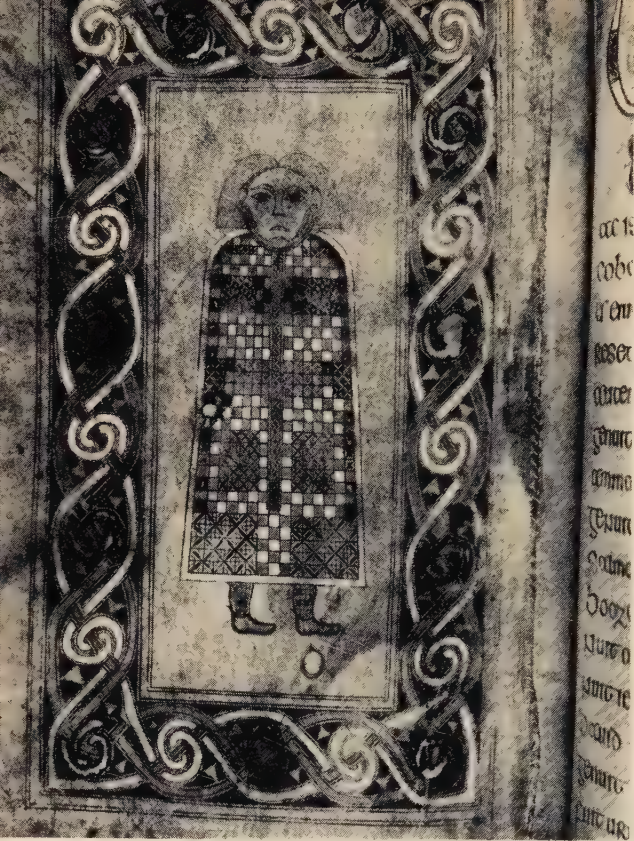
The art of the metal-worker is elsewhere evident in the *Book of Durrow*, notably on one of the "carpet-pages" which is ornamented with a field of broad-ribbon interlace into which are fitted rectangular panels of various geometric linear designs, including designs very similar to the metal grilles which were used to cap glass studs or to the metal cloisons which were used to contain enamel.

While the introduction to the Irish repertoire of simple ribbon-interlace and of figurative art can be traced back to the Mediterranean world, we must look to Anglo-Saxon England for the introduction of zoöomorphic or animal interlace. This type of ornament, later to be completely absorbed and transformed by the Celtic schools of art, occurs on one "carpet-page" in the *Book of Durrow*. There are three types of zoömorph displayed on this page, none closely identifiable with any particular beast. One is somewhat horse-like, one is

slightly reptilian, while the third might perhaps be called dog-like, and yet all three are apparently of the same family. All these animals have demonstrably Germanic ancestry and very close parallels for them can be easily found in the metal-work of seventh-century England. Some of the animals in the *Book of Durrow* hardly differ from their Anglo-Saxon prototypes and it almost seems as if the artist is copying them rather than following the Celtic tradition of transforming his models to suit his own inclinations. Whether this was due to a lack of familiarity with zoöomorphic interlace or a lack of sympathy with it is not clear, but this unusual situation, although not unique in the history of early Irish illumination, was short-lived.

In fact, the whole art of the *Book of Durrow* was short-lived, for the art of the subsequent illuminated manuscripts is quite different. The *Book of Durrow*, as we have already mentioned, was not so much a forerunner of the *Book of Lindisfarne*, the *Book of Kells* and others as a representative of a style which seems to have developed from various sources, to have flourished briefly, and then to have been discarded, only some of its elements continuing and being further developed in the later art-styles.

The art-style associated with Insular (i.e. Irish and Northumbrian) illuminated manuscripts seems to have been developed in the monasteries of Lindisfarne, Jarrow, Wearmouth, and elsewhere within the Northumbrian sphere of influence. This development seems to have taken place shortly before the end of the seventh century and, of course, to have been fundamentally based on the Irish-trained schools of art. The actual art-style differs, but the spirit behind it remains the same—Celtic. Curvilinear designs remain but are not so prominent as before; interlaced designs occur but are no longer made up of simple, broad-ribbon knotwork but of much finer and more tightly woven



Symbol of Saint Matthew—Book of Durrow.



Virgin and Child—Book of Kells.

patterns; zoöomorphic interlace is complex, contorted and intricate, altogether different from that seen in the *Book of Durrow*; ornithomorphic (i.e. with birds) interlace is introduced and becomes a prominent feature; vegetal *motifs* are also introduced; the various *motifs* are no longer kept carefully separated from one another but are fairly freely mixed; there is a noticeable improvement in figurative art though realism is still avoided; initials become ever larger and more ornate, tending to take over the whole page; the solid, heavy frames of the *Book of Durrow* are generally replaced by broken or interrupted frames; "carpet-pages" and other characteristic features of Irish illuminated manuscripts remain, of course, though new colours are used and a much greater impression of control and technical mastery over the art is noticeable.

There are many finely decorated manuscripts belonging to the earlier stages of this phase of illumination, but easily the finest and best-known is the *Book of Lindisfarne*. This large book of 258 folios, now preserved in the British Museum, was not written and illuminated by an Irishman but by a Saxon, namely Eadfrith, abbot-bishop of Lindisfarne from A.D. 698 to 721. It seems very probable that Eadfrith is identifiable with a monk called Ehfrid whom we know spent six years studying in Ireland some time shortly before 690. But whether he is or is not so identifiable is not of vital importance, as the known conditions of the time would lead us to believe that Eadfrith probably spent some time in Ireland anyway. Furthermore, the Irish tradition was so strong in Lindisfarne, and in Northumbria in general (from 684 to 704, for instance, the ruler of Northumbria was the half-Irish King Aldfrid, a former pupil of Saint Adamnán's), that it would naturally have permeated his training and education and, of course, have been expressed in his work. It is, therefore, not difficult to understand why the *Book of Lindisfarne*,

can be rightly termed one of the great books illuminated in the Irish manner.

The *Book of Lindisfarne* has been described as "the only fixed point in the art-history of this period" because we can date the abbacy-episcopacy of its author. However, even such information has not presented us with a generally acceptable date. One school of thought argues that Eadfrith must have written and illuminated the manuscript shortly before his elevation to the post of abbot-bishop in 698, perhaps writing it in connection with the preparations for the canonization of Saint Cuthbert (20 March, 698), the local saint of greatest importance, as afterwards his duties as abbot-bishop would have been too onerous to give him the necessary time to work at such a book. Another school of thought presents good arguments in favour of Eadfrith's writing and illuminating the book shortly before his death in 721, these arguments including the not quite finished state of the book. The matter is of some importance as the later dating would allow more time for the evolution of the art-style of the *Book of Lindisfarne*, and would thus help explain the very appreciable differences between the art of the *Book of Durrow* and of it—differences more easily explicable after the space of two generations than of one.

The forty-five distinct shades of colour found in the *Book of Lindisfarne* are of red (red lead), yellow (yellow arsenic sulphide, orpiment), blue (ultramarine), green (verdigris), purple (folium), brown (ochre), white (white lead), pink (purple compounded with white lead and chalk), and, twice, gold (gold leaf). The compact, beautifully balanced designs were planned geometrically, though oddly enough the recent detailed examination of the manuscript revealed that it was the curvilinear rather than the interlaced ornament which was the more mechanically drawn. Perhaps because of the extensive use of mechanical aids and because of its regularity, the art of the *Book of Lindisfarne* often presents a

rather monotonous, stilted, and lifeless appearance. One sometimes gets the impression that Eadfrith was an extremely competent craftsman, complete master of all the technical tricks of the trade, but not an inspired artist who would ever risk departing from recognised conventions.

Each of the four *Gospels* is preceded by a page with a portrait of the Evangelist and his symbol, then a "carpet-page", then the opening letters of the *Gospel*. Despite the seeming lifelessness of some of the designs when looked upon as a whole, their details are often teeming with life. The intricate, small-scale, compact, matted tissue of ornament such as fills the cross and the background of one of the best-known of its ornamental pages provides a good example of this. The general feeling is of a tangled clutter of dead worms, too regularly laid out in neatly symmetrical order to ever suggest that one of them might wriggle, yet if one examines closely any small part of the design a whole series of interlocked birds and beasts can be seen—it is the repetitiveness of the same group of interlocked birds and beasts which kills the whole. A somewhat similarly planned and worked out page in the *Lichfield Gospels*, roughly contemporary with the *Book of Lindisfarne*, appears to be a writhing, teeming mass of life (the background above the arms of the cross perhaps excepted), well illustrating the difference between the spark of genius of an artist and the dogged perfectionism of a craftsman.

Most of the illuminated manuscripts of this period, the first quarter of the eighth century, probably derive from "Irish" *scriptoria* in Northumbria, though that is not to say that the *scriptoria* in Ireland were idle. There can be little doubt but that there was a continual interchange of ideas and techniques between *scriptoria* in the two areas, and many eighth-century Irish illuminated manuscripts are known. These include large altar-books such as the *Saint Gall Gospels*—probably the book which

approaches closest to the *Books of Durrow*, *Lindisfarne*, and *Kells*, in fame and grandeur—and also several smaller "pocket-books" such as the *Book of Dimma* and the *Book of Mulling*. The art of these Irish manuscripts differs appreciably from those made in Northumbrian monasteries in that it is generally bolder, more daring, less involved, less sophisticated, perhaps, and more spontaneous in style and feeling. The Irish artist is courageous, works on a fairly large scale and is not afraid to slap bright colours bravely over large areas, nor afraid to take a chance on drawing a straight line or a spiral free-hand. He also has a sense of humour and an apparent disregard for what others might think. One gets the impression that he is the master and that he had every intention of producing the book the way he felt like, rather than the way his abbot thought best. He gives the impression of being an irrepressible Celt enjoying himself, in contrast to his colleagues in England who often seem to be well-disciplined strangers working in a Celtic idiom.

The manuscript which, perhaps, best illustrates the seeming disregard for law and order inherited by the Celtic artist is the *Book of Mac Regol*, now in the Bodleian Library, Oxford. This manuscript is the work of Mac Riaghoil ua Magleni, abbot of the monastery of Birr, Co. Offaly, who died in 822. The illuminated pages are few, but once seen are never forgotten. Red and yellow predominate, purple and green playing a lesser rôle. There is a self-confident, slap-dash effect about the whole work, which is about as rough-and-ready and unsophisticated as any "primitive" artist of the nineteenth or twentieth century ever managed. Everything seems to be left to chance, the artist seemingly letting himself go, not quite knowing what is going to happen but with the confidence of someone fully certain that only a masterpiece could result. Mac Regol was obviously a strong-willed man of great character, though not necessarily a person

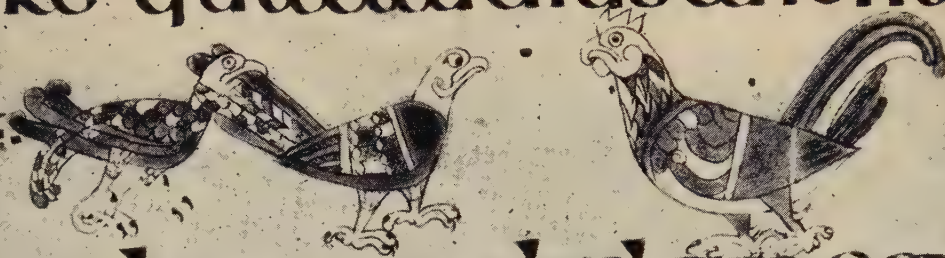


Chi-Ro page—Book of Kells—detail.

Animal in text—Book of Kells.



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Above: *Birds in text.* Right: *Animal in text—both Book of Kells.*



Interlace decoration in human motif in text—Book of Kells.

of much charm; perhaps a simple soul, who by dint of hard work and personal sanctity had become an abbot and a bishop, the type of person who would irritate others yet would be loved in retrospect. Such is the picture evoked by his bold strokes of colour, not necessarily filling the areas intended nor necessarily being confined to those places, his wild, free-hand spirals, his utter lack of restraint, the inconsequential way in which his lovely lettering is thrown together on the illuminated pages, and the garish effect of the finished result. There is little doubt but that Mac Regol was a born not a highly skilled artist, but an individualist, perhaps self-taught, and, furthermore, a real Celt, every inch an Irishman—the prototype, perhaps, of the old-fashioned, stern but well loved, Irish country priest.

The Celtic genius displayed by Mac Regol did not result in the masterpiece the artist may have felt he had produced, mainly because of the well-nigh complete lack of discipline and control his work displays. When the Celtic genius was combined with firm but not inhibiting discipline and control, it could be superior to anything, and it was just such a combination which produced the real masterpiece of all illumination, the *Book of Kells*.

It is not certain whether or not there was a monastery at Kells before the Columban monks fleeing from Iona, as a consequence of Viking raids, arrived there at the beginning of the ninth century. If there was, then it can hardly be described as thriving nor, indeed, as in any way active. It seems unlikely, therefore, that work on the *Book of Kells* was actually instigated at Kells, though there seems to be some grounds for believing that it was finished there, having been begun in Iona. It has been, however, historically associated with Kells from a very early date, until Cromwellian times when it was sent to Dublin for safety and shortly afterwards was presented to the Library of Trinity College, Dublin, where

it still is housed. A large book, containing the *Gospels* and some introductory matter, it has at present 340 folios—originally it had about 350 folios but now a few folios at both ends are missing. It is more luxuriantly decorated than any other Irish illuminated manuscript, the colours including various shades of red, blue, yellow, bright green, olive-green, purples, brown and white. It is in a "mixed text", of the Old Latin and Vulgate versions, typical of most Irish manuscripts, and was carelessly copied, including, as it does, many misspellings and other errors. However, it is unlikely that the *Book of Kells* ever was intended for reading and so such errors would never have been considered as very serious blemishes—the *Book of Kells* is, as one commentator has so aptly remarked, primarily a visual experience.

Almost every feature and characteristic that we have seen before in the earlier illuminated Irish manuscripts is to be found in the *Book of Kells*. We find the Celtic curvilinear art, the oriental ribbon-interlace, the Anglo-Saxon zoö-morphic interlace, the geometric key- and fret-patterns, the inhabited vine, the ornithomorphic interlace, the pseudo-realistic portraits, the large initial letters with the following letters decreasing in size, and also numerous other new features such as the frequent use of little humans, animals, birds and fishes introduced into the decoration and into the text itself. And most important of all, the whole treatment of the decoration is executed in the same Celtic tradition, with its love of pure ornamentation and instinctive abhorrence of naturalistic effects, as that which was common to the Celts of pre-Roman times.

It can hardly be doubted that work on the *Book of Kells* continued over a period of several years, and there is equally little doubt about its not all being the work of one person. The hands of several artists have been identified by Doctor Françoise Henry, probably the most able expert in



Chi-Ro page in the Book of Kells.

the field of early Irish illumination. By a detailed study of their various styles, she has segregated the work of artists whom she calls the "goldsmith", the "portraitist", the "illustrator", and the "animal painter", while the work of a miscellaneous group of less expert artists is assigned to the "pupils". Despite their several individual styles, all were probably from the same Iona-Kells *scriptorium* and were, in consequence, working together, presumably in complete accord. This gives the whole book a feeling of unity, a unity which is at least partly due to the Celtic treatment of the entire scheme of decoration as well as of the individual *motifs*. There is little of the Classical artistic approach to be seen in the work: for instance, the almost entirely decorative nature of the "goldsmith's" famous Chi-Rho (Monogram of Christ) page well illustrates the Celtic love of pure ornamentation, while the flat, unemotional, unrealistic aspect of the figures of the angels and of the Virgin and Child painted by the "illustrator" clearly demonstrates the Celtic instinctive abhorrence of naturalistic effects.

The Chi-Rho page is generally regarded as the finest page in the *Book of Kells*, being without equal for its masterly planning, minute detail, controlled colouring and sheer virtuosity. Its mood has been described as a "sort of decorative intoxication", while another has described the page as "a strange asymmetrical construction weighed down by a multiplicity of minute decoration, which by some miracle of the art he [the "goldsmith"] has brought to a state of equilibrium. . . . At once unique in execution and at the same time the culmination of a long historical development, it remains the supreme achievement in the field of illumination." But no words can describe this wonderful page. At first glance, its *motifs* all appear to be curvilinear, ultimately based on Celtic spirals, coils and whirling, swelling lines. A second glance reveals that much of the ornament consists of plain, zoöomorphic, and ornithomorphic

interlacing, and that hard, straight lines and geometrical, rectilinear patterns are also present. And a third glance disentangles several angels, human faces, and even little scenes of animals playing, also two moths pulling in opposite directions at a lozenge, and an otter catching a fish. Although these little animal scenes are perhaps the work of the "animal painter", it would obviously have been the idea of the designer of the page, the "goldsmith", to introduce them into the ornament. It takes the fourth glance to appreciate the fact that, by a veritable succession of strokes of genius, the artist has been triumphantly successful in so integrating all the various *motifs* that the page has a unity of style—the impression gained at the first glance was inaccurate but justified. This page is truly the finest demonstration of the Celtic spirit at work; nobody but a Celt could have produced it; it is an ornamental page—the nearest thing to a "carpet-page" in the *Book of Kells*—of which all Celts of the past, present and future should be proud.

The illustration of the seated Virgin holding the Christ-Child on her crossed knees and surrounded by four angels presents quite the other aspect of Irish art of the period. The models for this illustration were obviously Eastern, perhaps Coptic, but were equally obviously copied by a Celt who had not much sympathy with realism but possessed definite ideas regarding design and colour. He shows his lack of interest in realistic illustration in several little ways, not least in the fact that the Child has two left feet and perhaps also two left hands, that the Virgin has two right feet, that the left hand of the angel in the upper right corner has five fingers, and that the angel in the bottom left corner has two left hands. His daring use of strong colours, particularly a deep purple with an apple-green, and sometimes combined with a bright cherry-red, shows the natural, unsophisticated eye which the "illustrator" had for decoration. He applied



Crucifixion page—Southampton Psalter.

his colours fearlessly and solidly, but somehow with a flair for balance and design which succeeds in elevating this curious colour scheme from the primitive to the artistic. His love and appreciation of strong colours, nicely yet not geometrically balanced, is surely a Celtic characteristic inherited from his prehistoric ancestors.

The Virgin and Child is not, perhaps, the best of the "illustrator's" work. The Arrest of Christ is probably his finest page. This is a strong, wild yet controlled, overpowering picture, though it, too, shows a contempt for naturalistic realism—Christ is being held by what, if the scale were uniform, could only be interpreted as two dwarfs, one of whom has two left hands and both of whom appears to have two left feet.

The work of the "illustrator" differs from that of the "portraist", whose work is impressive and imposing, and possesses a controlled discipline and symmetrical balance not so evident elsewhere in the *Book of Kells*. His portraits of Saint John, Saint Matthew, and that which has been variously interpreted as Saint Mark, Saint Luke, or Christ, are rightly regarded as the most impressive effigies ever designed by an Irish artist. Based on Eastern prototypes, they nonetheless betray their Celtic treatment. Who but a Celt would have interlaced the strands of Christ's hair (for it is most probably Christ rather than either Luke or Mark); or would have given Him an extra toe on His right foot; or would have humorously depicted a seemingly toothless angel such as the one in the bottom right corner of the page; or have given that angel only four toes on his right foot while giving the upper left angel six toes on his left foot; or would have drawn a figure which is apparently standing but obviously intended to be seated (note the arms of the chair and the way Christ's right knee is shown as projecting forwards); and who but a Celt could have so curiously and imaginatively depicted Christ's left

hand (holding the book) by not illustrating it at all?

The "animal painter" had a delicate sense of humour which he combined with keen observation to produce numerous charming vignettes which he scattered throughout the *Book of Kells*. His little sketches are sometimes fairly realistic, though not in the Classical manner, as, for instance, when he sketched the otter catching the fish on the Chi-Rho page, or little men, squatting or seated, as they drink out of chalice-like goblets. But much more often the "animal painter's" efforts are by no means realistic, and are truly Celtic in their quite unnatural construction, in their attributes such as trefoil or lobate endings to tails and in the ever-present humorous touches.

There are several other illuminated manuscripts of roughly the same early ninth-century period as the *Book of Kells*, but none even approaching it in majesty, artistry, sheer luxury, and wealth of decoration. Chief among these roughly contemporary books is probably the *Book of Armagh*, now also in the Library of Trinity College. This is a composite manuscript, written by Ferdomnach, a most accomplished scribe who died in A.D. 846 but who had written part, if not all, of the *Book of Armagh* in 807–8, as can be deduced from one of the colophons. Whether Ferdomnach was also responsible for all the art in the *Book of Armagh* is not certain, but he probably was the artist who penned the enlarged initials and, if so, may well have also penned the Evangelical symbols which some suspect may have been done by another hand. These are pen-and-ink drawings and betray a style of art which is much more sophisticated than is normal in Irish illumination. Although this impression of sophistication is, perhaps, mainly due to the absence of colours, it is not the sole reason. The symbols are elegantly drawn in a way which seems to be a trifle mannerist and precious, and not in the Celtic spirit of controlled abandon. They are awkward

and uninspired, perhaps merely fairly competent copies of non-Irish originals, such as a competent craftsman, rather than an artist, could have produced—this, and their lack of colour, proclaim them to be the products of a scribe rather than of an illuminator.

The art of the *Book of Armagh* does not seem to have played an important rôle in the history of Irish illumination. One reason for this may be that it seems to be the art of a scribe rather than that of an artist, but another reason may be that because of the Viking raids of the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries, the monastic *scriptoria* were unable to continue to develop their art in peace. Despite these raids, however, there remain a few illuminated manuscripts dating from Viking times. The best of these include the *Book of Mac Durnan*, now in the Lambeth Palace Library, London, the psalter, Ms. Cotton Vitellius F.XI, now in the British Museum, and the *Southampton Psalter*, now in the Library of St. John's College, Cambridge.

The *Book of Mac Durnan* dates probably from the second half of the ninth century, and can perhaps be described as a rather degenerate successor to the early ninth-century Irish illuminated manuscripts. The *Psalter* in the Cotton Collection can be dated to the beginning of the tenth century, and breaks with earlier tradition in containing framed large-scale iconographic scenes, somewhat reminiscent of those on the Scripture Crosses of roughly the same date. The artist seems to be completely at sea with such scenes, and the figures are amateurishly drawn, giving the impression of being disjointed, almost as if made up from a *collage* of flat pieces of wood. The non-figurative art is much better, but is not particularly inspired, be it interlacing or key-pattern. The *Southampton Psalter* is datable to the early eleventh century, and its illumination is much in the same style as that of the Cotton *Psalter*. It also contains framed iconographic scenes with the figures

on a plain background, but the figures do not fill the framed area as fully as those of the earlier manuscript. Colours are few, mainly red and yellow, and the art is degenerate and lacking in originality, while the figures are almost comical in their flatness, simplicity, and puppet-like appearance.

As can be seen, the period of the Viking raids witnessed an appreciable decline in the art of the country, not least in that of the illuminated manuscripts. In a way, it was a period of transition between the great art of the seventh, eighth and early ninth centuries, culminating in the *Book of Kells*, and the Romanesque art of the post-Viking centuries. A decline was about due, as it would have been well-nigh impossible to keep up the standard of the art of the *Book of Kells*, much less improve on it, and so we need not cast too much blame on the Vikings. It was time for a change, and the curious iconographical pictures of the tenth and early eleventh-century manuscripts such as in the Cotton and the "Southampton" *Psalters*, perhaps were a deliberate effort to move forward from the earlier art which had been exploited as fully as seemed possible. Such also might be said for the figurative sculpture of the High Crosses which are not in the earlier tradition but signal the approach of the later Romanesque art in many ways. The purely decorative *motifs* such as the curvilinear and interlaced ornament did not disappear altogether, however, and, though uninspired and apparently degenerate, they are found decorating the initial letters or filling the frames around the pictorial scenes in the manuscripts of the period. On the High Crosses such ornament is also found, and though often very fine technically and very pleasing to the eye, it tends to be more mechanical and symmetrical than that which went before. Curvilinear art was all but bankrupt of ideas, while interlaced art was almost played out . . . it was truly time for a change.

Pre-historic Art in Ireland

by

BREANDÁN Ó RIORDÁIN

THE earliest known art is that of the Palaeolithic times—roughly between 30000 and 9000 B.C. Many examples of the art of this period in the form of human female figurines and little models of mammoth, bear and ibex have been discovered in Central and West European countries, such as Austria, Germany, Belgium and France.

Painted cave art, first recognised in 1879 in the now famous cave at Altamira in the Cantabrian Mountains in northern Spain, also belongs to this general period and many other examples of cave art have come to notice since then in the limestone caves of France and Spain to the north and south of the Pyrenees. Much of this Palaeolithic art of the Continent, whether on carved figurines or painted on the walls of caves, represents the art of the early hunters and probably has some magical significance connected with hunting and the quest for food.

Ireland was not inhabited during Palaeolithic times and, therefore, does not have any art of the period. Prehistoric Irish art can be said to begin with the arrival in Ireland of the first real cultivators of the soil in the Neolithic or New Stone Age and it is with the application of art to

the stones of tombs of this period that we can begin to speak of prehistoric Irish art. This art was initially of Mediterranean origin and spread to the adjoining countries and the best parallels for the art of Irish megalithic tombs are to be found in Spain and, more convincingly perhaps, in Brittany.

The finest art of this period in Ireland is exemplified on the stones of the Passage Grave at New Grange and in the recently discovered Passage Graves at Knowth; both of these tombs form part of the great Stone Age cemetery sited close to the River Boyne, near Slane in Co. Meath. The artistic motifs on these and other tombs of this class include lozenges, chevrons and spirals as well as some examples of wheel patterns, serpent-like devices and face motifs. Apart from the art on megalithic tombs other carvings, which probably date to this general period, have been found on natural rock outcrops and boulders in various parts of the country—in West Cork and Kerry, in particular—and the motifs include concentric circles, gapped circles with radial grooves and patterns of dots.

The megalithic art of the tombs can be dated to Stone Age times, around 2000 B.C. In the succeeding Bronze Age the develop-



HIGHLY DECORATED ENTRANCE STONE OF
NEWGRANGE TUMULUS,
CO. MEATH

ment of the craft of working copper, bronze and gold allowed of a wide variety of objects in these materials on which we can follow the progression of art. Bronze axeheads, crescent-shaped neck ornaments formed of thin sheets of gold and known as *lumulae*, as well as burial pottery found in Bronze Age graves are among the many objects of the period on which artistic motifs occur. In the later portion of the Bronze Age, in the period between roughly 1000 and 500 B.C., a greater range of objects and a sense of freedom and experimentation, together with new influences from Northern and Central Europe, resulted in the execution of such masterpieces as the gold 'fibula' from Clones in Co. Monaghan and the gold collar from Gleninsheen in Co. Clare.

The Early Iron Age in Ireland is the period of the first flowering of 'Celtic' art in this country. We do not know exactly when the Celts first arrived in Ireland but in the centuries immediately preceding the Birth of Christ the new art style makes its appearance. Distinctive of this new art are the long sweeping trumpet curves, the hair-spring scrolls and lentoid bosses which are to be seen on many of the objects of bronze and gold made at that time.

The art metalwork which has survived from the Iron Age is itself limited in character; most of it is connected with the equipment of warriors—their swords,

scabbards and bridle bits of bronze. This period is reflected in the earliest stories of Early Irish Literature—the *Táin Bó Cuailgne* and other tales of the Ulster Cycle and from these texts the importance and respect attaching to craftsmen and skilled metal-workers are apparent.

Apart from the equipment of warriors a number of other items call for special mention: these include the beautifully wrought gold collar from Broughter, near Limavady in Co. Derry, and another example, found near Clonmacnoise in Co. Offaly—and an exceedingly long and well made trumpet of bronze with its ornamental disc which was found at Loughnashade, near Navan Fort in Co. Armagh.

A few large stones decorated with Iron Age art also survive and they are of particular interest insofar as they show that the art of the period was not confined to movable objects. The rounded block of granite at Turoe in Co. Galway with its bas-relief designs of spiral-ended trumpets and triskele, the examples from Killycluggin in Co. Cavan and Castlestrange in Co. Roscommon are all probably classifiable as religious monuments.

With the coming of Christianity in the fifth century the blending of the old art with the new is everywhere apparent and the intermingling of these art styles has given us the many masterpieces of Early Christian art in Ireland.

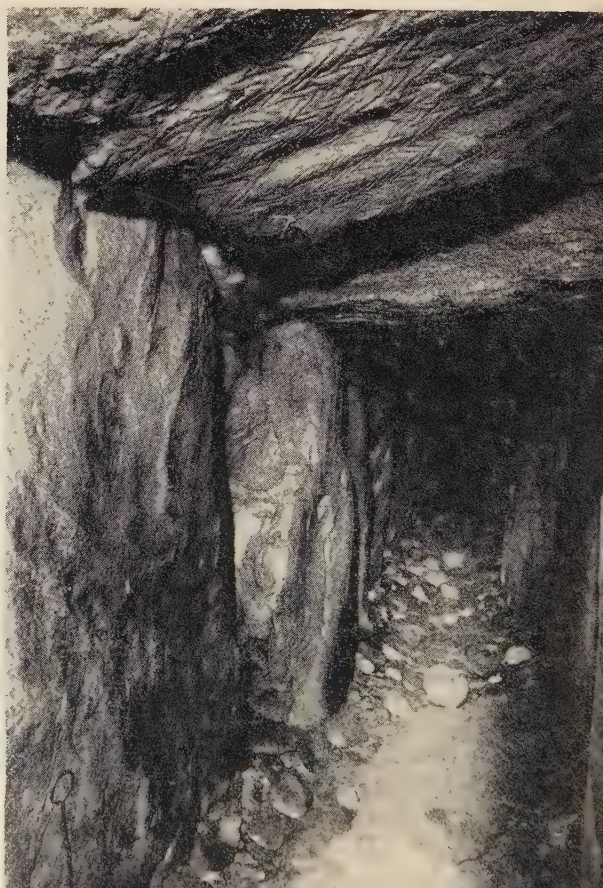


Decorated neo-lithic Kerb Stones at Knowth, Co. Meath.





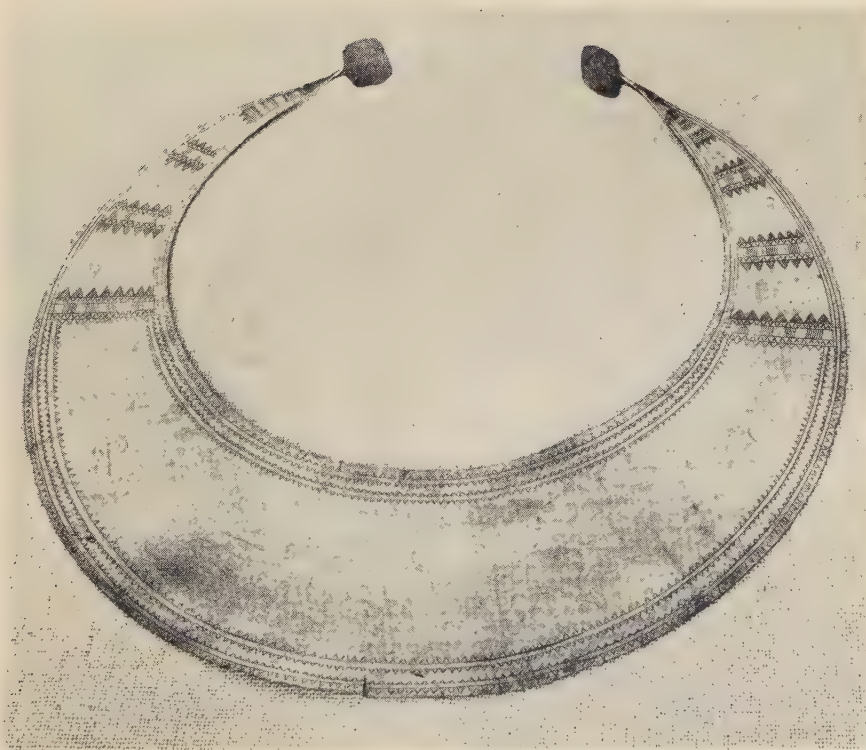
The highly decorated Turoe Stone, Co. Galway.



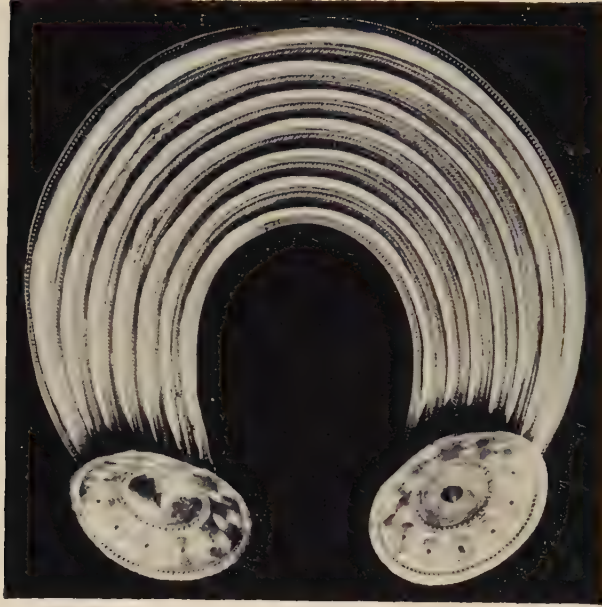
An Entrance Passage at Knowth Tumulus, Co. Meath. Different types of decoration can be seen on the Stones



Gold collar from Brough, Co. Derry.



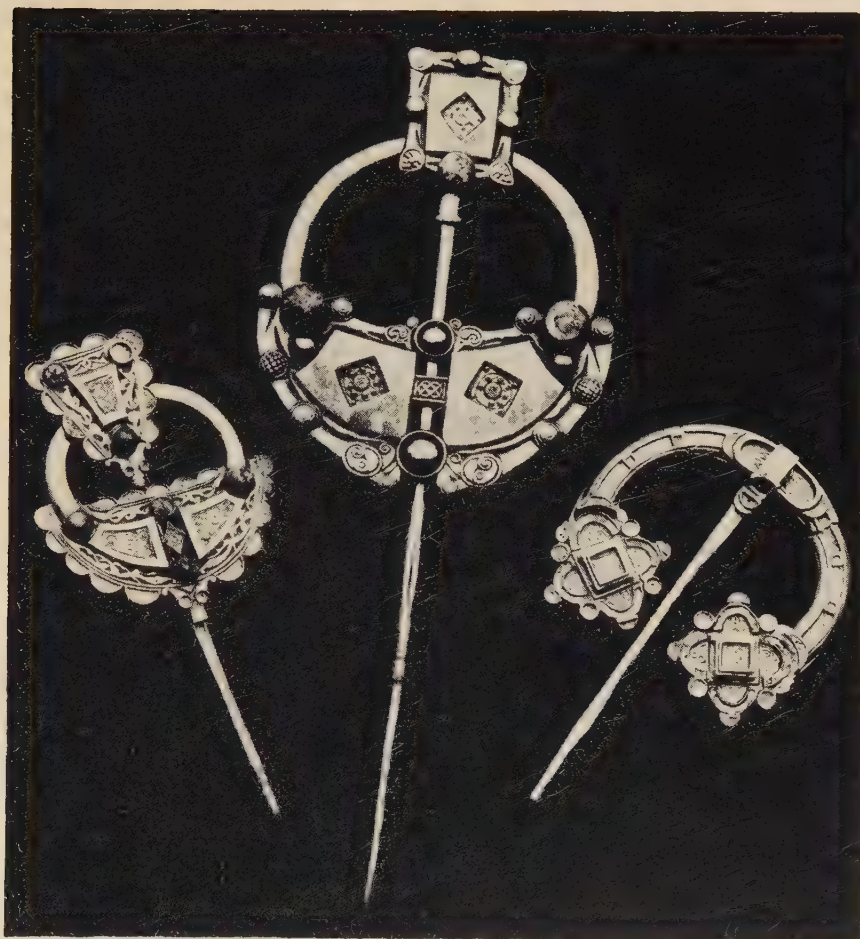
Gold Lunula from Ross, Co. Westmeath.



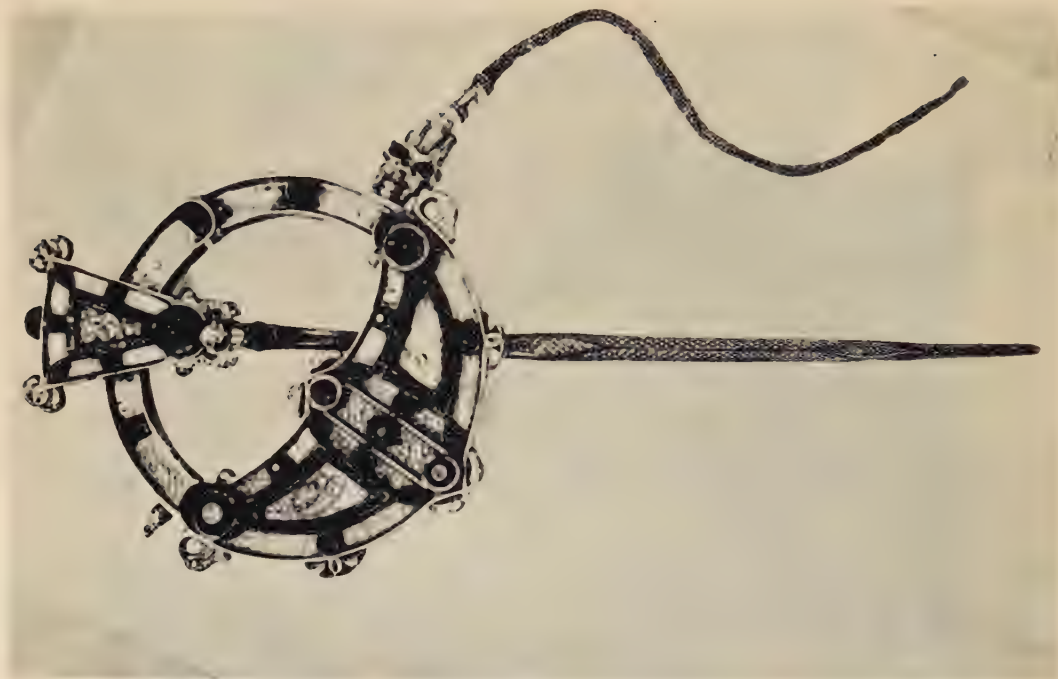
Gold Collar found at Glenisheen, Co. Clare.



Disc of bronze trumpet from Loughnashade, Co. Armagh.



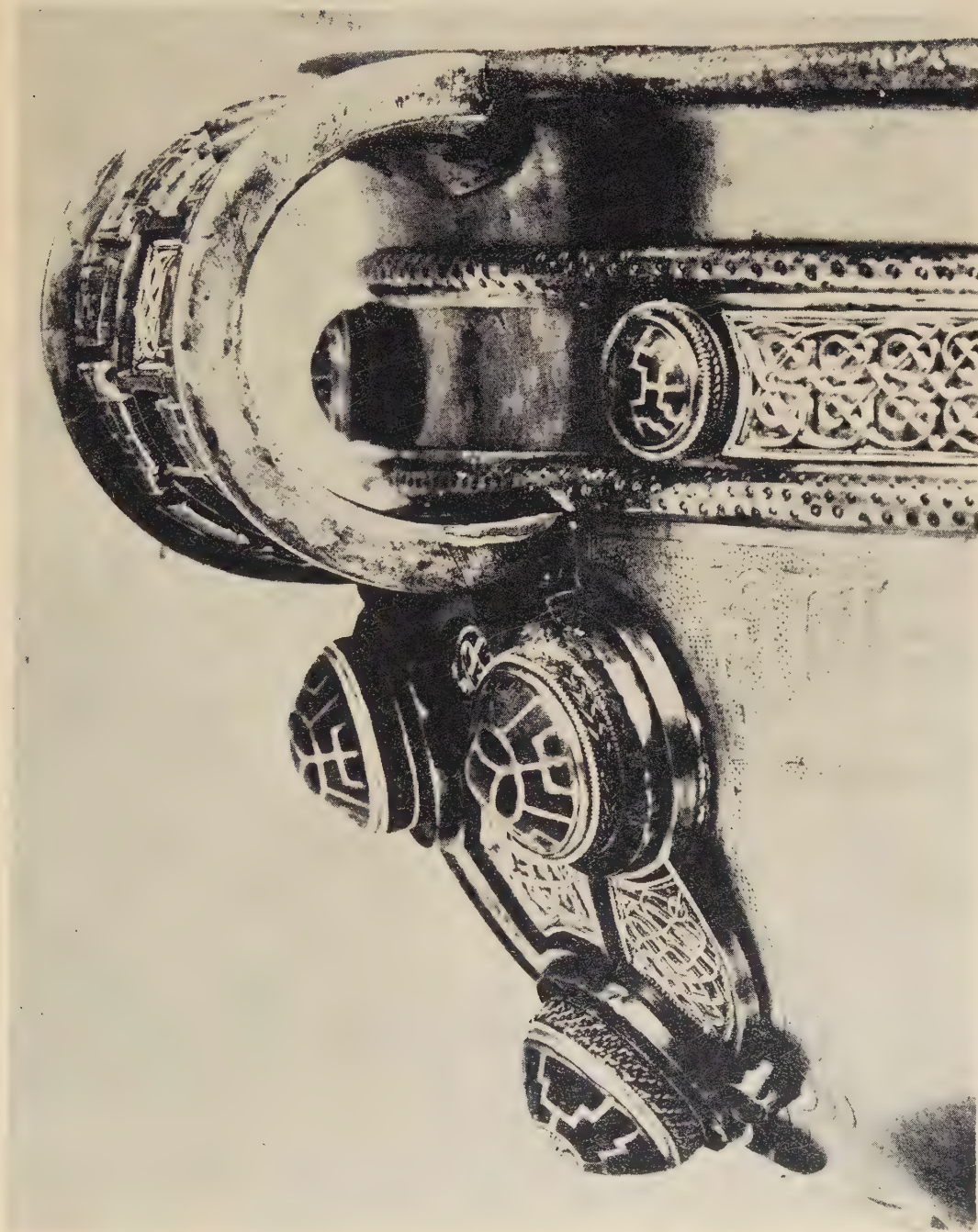
Three highly ornamented brooches found, from l. to r., at Roscrea, Co. Tipperary; Killamery, Co. Kilkenny and Kilmainham, Co. Dublin.



Brooch found at Bettystown, Co. Meath. Known as the Tara Brooch.



Tara Brooch—detail of top of pin.



Ardagh Chalice found in Limerick, Christian era—detail.



Shrine of the Gospels of Saint Molaise of Devenish Island, circa A.D. 1100. This is the oldest extant example of the many beautiful metal shrines in which copies of the Gospels were preserved—Christian era.

BROTHER OFFICER

By

CHARLES C. O'CONNELL

HE stood pallid and tense before the senior officers. Though he was now unarmed and shorn of all his field equipment, it seemed as though he were carrying an intolerable load. The weight of his helmet was almost unbearable and he could scarcely keep his head erect. His right arm which had been twisted viciously behind his back hung limply now by his side, numb and lifeless except for a heavy pulse that beat under his arm-pit.

He stood with his feet apart although years of discipline urged him to stand to attention. It was a question of balance. With his legs together he would topple over. He knew also that it made little difference how he presented himself. The verdict of the court was a foregone conclusion. Technically he had disobeyed orders. According to their code he was a rebel. Only his own conscience could justify his action.

The heat inside the tent was stifling. He longed to step back a little into the current of air that moved the canvas by the door, but he dared not. Such involuntary action might antagonize his judges even more, and although he could see no vestige of mercy in their stern faces he had hopes that in spite of everything they would ultimately understand.

The voice of one of the officers jarred on his ears:

"You have heard the evidence. Have you anything to say?"

The prisoner thought for a moment. Had he anything to say in his own defence? He could say many things, yet nothing that they could understand. Indeed, the instinct that prompted his alleged felonious decision was incomprehensible to himself. He could express his abhorrence of this current carnage—the desperate resort of an insane leader to stamp out all political opposition—but it would not be relevant. He knew that his personal feelings concerning this mass murder did not fully explain why he had departed from the army code. The thing that motivated him was buried in the recesses of his being.

"Answer the question!" snarled the officer.

"I have nothing to say."

"Do you deny that you allowed those enemies of the state through?"

"I let them through," said the prisoner quietly, admitting the charge for the first time.

The officer smiled thinly. "Your honesty is commendable, but it would have been useless to deny the charge. Your very best friend and brother officer witnessed your

treachery and is here to testify against you if necessary."

My friend and brother officer. . . . The prisoner looked across at the witness. That pale impassive face gave no hint of emotion. The eyes were fixed straight ahead at nothing in particular except, perhaps, on his stern duty. How the prisoner envied his friend's simplicity of mind. For him there were no personal decisions of conscience; no nagging questions about the morality of what they were commanded to do. Everything was understandable when related to the leader's inflexible orders. . . . *This is my duty. This is the way the orders read. This is why I must report this thing even if it means the death of my dearest friend. . . .*

The prisoner recalled how his friend had pleaded with him while they were marching back to the city. "Tell me you did not know what you were doing," he had begged. "Say you experienced a moment of madness, and I will disbelieve the evidence of my own eyes."

He had pleaded for a lie to placate his conscience and had only silence for his trouble.

The officer rapped the table, shocking the prisoner from his reverie.

"You knew at the time that what you did was contrary to your standing orders?"

"Yes."

The officer sat down and held a whispered consultation with his companion. One of the guards behind the prisoner shuffled his feet for an instant and was still again. Then, the second officer spoke. His was a soft face with none of the harsh lines of the previous interrogator.

"We would be interested to know why you allowed all of them to escape. Had you done your duty by one there would have been no trouble."

The prisoner remained silent.

"Were they friends of yours?" asked the officer.

"I did not know them, sir."

"Did they bribe you?"

"They offered no bribe, sir."

"Then why did you allow them to go?"

"At the time I believed it was the just thing to do."

"Do you still feel that your actions were just?"

"Yes."

"What do you know of justice?" sneered the officer.

The prisoner closed his eyes. Once again the picture of the three refugees came to his mind. They were fleeing from a terror which he represented. He had not harmed or detained them because they looked so desperately tired; or, perhaps, it was because of the heart-rending appeal in the young girl's eyes; or maybe it was because of the baby in her arms, so helpless in a world gone mad. . . . Whatever the reason his orders had suddenly appeared monstrously evil.

He opened his eyes and looked directly at the officer.

"I am a soldier, sir, not a murderer."

Then the guard behind him struck him at the base of the neck and he slumped to the ground. He was vaguely conscious of being kicked, but surprisingly it did not hurt. A strange sense of unreality possessed him as though he existed only in a dream.

Sometime later he found himself on his feet again. The business of the court had ended. There had been no death sentence. One of the senior officers merely nodded his head to the guard and the prisoner was propelled towards the tent flap. He stumbled as he came into the sunlight and his helmet fell off. Nobody picked it up. He would have no further use for it. The cool air stirring through his matted hair was as invigorating as wine. He was rushed forward and then, some distance from the tent behind a high screening boulder, his guards stopped to prop him against the sharp, sunbaked stone.

The prisoner was under no illusion. He

knew that in a very short time he would be dead. Yet he had no regrets. Perhaps it would be better to leave this world of injustice and suffering. He wondered if it would always be like this. That could hardly be possible. Surely, one day men would realize the futility of bloodshed. Perhaps in a thousand years or even two thousand years from now men would

have at last learned to live as brothers and there would be no more betrayal, nor greed, nor wars, nor murder.

He stood erect. He did not feel afraid. He was filled with a strange new hope. He thought of those three travel-stained refugees. He hoped they got through to Egypt. Once there the child would be safe from Herod's barbarous assassins.

WONDERSIGHT

*A green leaf dancing in the breeze—
He smiles big-eyed at what he sees,
And simple flowers growing wild
Are sheer delight to my young child,
And sparrows winging swiftly by
Tilt his small head to the sky;
The flying miracle he saw
Wreaths his little face in awe.
The grandeur of the simple things—
The leaf, the flowers, the speeding wings,
The sunlight and the clouded skies—
Is there reflected in his eyes.
O God! I wish that I could see
The miracle of your works—as he.
Fill my mind with child-like light;
Put back the wonder in my sight.*

CHARLES C. O'CONNELL

ROSA I O'TIĞ A ŠEAN-AČAR

le

moclás tóibín

A DEIR ROSA go mbéidir go ndéarfað daoine ná cuimneod sé ar rudaí a čárla do agus é ar a baclainn as a máčair nó nuair a bí sé trí blian o'aois, ac ní raib don béidir aige féin leis sin. Ráinig go raib aineam—rian gearradh nó marc—ar a éadán. Seo mar a čárla an marc san air: bí sé ar a drom as an scailín a bíod as tabairt aire do lá agus bí sé as sleamnú siar síos dá drom. Úain sí stuir nó cročad aisti féin cun é o'árdač anáirde ar a suailne agus ráinig gur čač sí čar a ceann ar an tsráid é. Čáinig cloč péna éadán agus de deascarod an gearradh a cuiread ann o'fan a rian air i gcomnaí. Úain an tionóisc seo do sar an deacarod sé go tiğ a sean-ačar. Čug sé čeitre bliana lena sean-ačair. Níor čáinig sé abailte go raib sé seacđ mbliana o'aois agus b'sin an uair a čosnağ a čuir scoláiočta.

Da mór aige i gcomnaí na čeitre bliana a čug sé i otiğ a sean-ačar. Tiğ feirmeora a bí ann agus čug san eolas do ar an nádúir, ar an bpíor šaol šaelac, agus caoi ar a beic as éisteač leis an teangain

šaelge agus á labairt i slí agus ná raib don oóğ go mbead don duad aige léi ina oiaid sin. Deirči go raib an “brós” aige agus b'abar maoite leis é sin—bí sé sásta gan don čanúin teangan dá malairt a leasú. Bí sé as tabairt léacđta i nDétroit oíce agus ar a čeač amac an mór-doras i measc an tsluağ, čuala sé laistiar de bean uasal a rá lena compánač: “nac millteač an ‘brós’ atá aige”

B'aic le Rosa an tağairt sin. Deinean luč an Úearla, mar a deir Rosa féin, leač-scéal do duine ó don náisiún eile ar domán a labrann Úearla briste ac amáin don nšael. Cuireann siad an “brós” ina leic mar séala na hainbřiosa. “Níl anso,” a deir Rosa, “ac cuir de leatrom daoirse šael, mar tá an teanga Úearla čom eačtránač agus čom mí-nádúirčta leis an nšael agus atá sí le duine o'don náisiúntač eile nac de šliočđ labarčta an Úearla; agus go mberod sé o'fearúl-ačđ i šclanna šael leatrom na daoirse seo a čur ar ceal agus clai a čur léi, ní béir an t-ionad is dual as á očír ná as á očeağain i measc náisiún na cruinne.”

b'í an Šaeilge teanga teaghlais a šean-ačar. b'í a labartaí le linn an béile, le linn na mbó a crú ar an mbán; b'í teanga an earraig agus teanga an fómair í, b'í labraó an luēt buainte agus an meiteal agus iad ag déanamh an fómair. Béidir go labartaí focail béarla nuair a časao an tiarna talún nó béarlóirí an tsli, ac b'í an Šaeilge an teanga ba dual agus ba nádúrta le gac duine den teaglac, agus b'í an teanga sin an čeao teanga ba čaiteac le Rosa, ionas go raib sé féin agus an teanga ag pás agus ag éirí suas le čeile.

Cončobar Ó hEoirsceoil ab ainm do šean-ačair Rosa. Bí comnaí air i Rinn na Scríne. Ba mór an clann a bí aige—triúr mac agus hočtar iníon. Eiblin ab ainm don té ba šine ar an gclann agus ní raib sí ac čuig bliana déas o'aois nuair a pós sí Dončao Ó Donabáin Rosa ó Čarraig an Šrianáin. U'sin é ačair Rosa.

Do réir mar a čarla ní raib mórán duair leis an gcleamnas. U'amlaio a bí Dončao Ó Donabáin i nóróm a čapail ar a čeac abailte ó aonac Ros Cairbre tráčnóna. Bí roint cailíní bailite ag tobar ar taob bóčair Rinn na Scríne. Staoadar an capall agus o'élíodar "féirín" ar Dončao. Čus sé gini dóib agus b'í máčair Rosa—Eiblin Nic Eoirsceoil—glac an gini bui óir uair. Níorb fáda go raib geal-lúint pósta eatorču.

Čuair muintir máčar Rosa ansan ar čuair čun tiģe muintire a ačar i gČarraig an Šrianáin lena déanamh amac an raib muintir a ačar oiriúnac nó sásúil go leor leo. Ba čosúil go raib gac ní i gčeart agus deineaó an cleamnas. Ac deirtear gur éirig sórt aignis ioir beirt sean-ačar Rosa ina diaio sin. Bíoó lín-čaoac

ar tuar ag šean-ačair le Rosa—ačair a ačar—ar fuair na feirme agus an lá a čuair an šean-ačair eile—ačair a máčar—ar čuair čun Čarraig an Šrianáin, bí an stór mar a gcoimeaočai an lín-čaoac čaioite le piosai lín-čaoaig tuarča, agus sil sé gur čuio de máoin agus o'llmáiteas an teaghlais iad, ac tar éis an pósta, núair a čáinig na comarsain fé déin a gcuio piosai lín-čaoaig agus a čusaoar leo iad, dúirt an šean-ačair—Cončobar Ó hEoirsceoil—ná rabčas macánta leis gur cuireao an dub ina geal air. O'éirig sé ana-čeargac agus dúirt sé go mbá-čao sé é féin. "Báčao mé féin! báčao mé féin!" ar sé.

"Ó, go réio, a duine! Bíoó ciall agac!" ars an šean-ačair eile.

"Bíoó poigne agac! Ba goire don bčairge Domnall Ó Dončao ná čusa agus níor báio sé é féin."

U'amlaio bí Domnall Ó Dončao tar éis a iníon a čabairt le pósao o'oncail Rosa—Cončobar Ó Donabáin—čamaillin roime sin.

U'aoibinn, gan don amras, le Rosa na čeitre bliana—an tréimse a čus sé agus é go hós i očiğ a šean-ačar i Rinn na Scríne. Is geal mar a čuireann sé síos orču. Bíoó cúpla cailín aimsire agus cúpla buacail aimsire i gcomnaí sa tiğ; bíoó fiče bó bainne le crú agus bí capail, caoire, gabair, muca agus éanlaite clóis go leor le haire a čabairt dóib. Ba breá leis a beic ag cuimneamh ar am crúite na mbó sa mbán ar čúl an tiģe! Na ba ag cošaint a gcuio cleobair go sollamanta, na cailíní aimsire ag canao go soineanta agus iad ag crú agus ag líonao na mbu-čaeoí uacu, bolao cumra an nua-čeamnačta agus an nua-čleobair, an čuiseog a cantain san aer an-

áirde mar a bhead sí ag ceileadbraó agus ar don fonn leis an mbinn-amhránaíocht ar talamh.

“B’sin an uair,” a’deir Rosa, “a raib an glóir i nGac ní im timpeal. Ba mise peata an teaghlai. Nac mé a bíod go fústrac ar maidin Dia Domhnaigh agus mé ag tabhairt óróú do na buacailí an capall dubh a raib an aghairó bán air o’páil réir don aifreann! Agus nuair a bíod an capall réir nac mé a rithead amac an bóitrín ar an mbótar mór cun a beir ag péadaint ar mo sean-atair ag marcaíocht air—an búcla mór i mbóna a cóta móir go taitneamhac agus ar d’ac an óir agus mo sean-máthair ar a diallair clatánac laistiar de!”

Ní raib ac gairtín abalgoirt i’oir tigh sean-atair Rosa agus na tighthe muintire eile a bí ar leirg an cnoic. Ní raib ann ac d’ac tigh. Beirt deartár d’ac sean-atair—pádraigh agus Doncad—a bí iontu. Toisc gac teaghlac a beir go líonmar bí d’óchain sráio-baile big daoine isna trí tighthe agus nuair a tagad buacailí ón gcomarsanac an tsli gac trácnóna cun buacad leis na cailíní, bíod spórt go leor o’don tsráio-baile ar siúl.

Ansan cuireann Rosa síos ar an scol-maigistir a bí aige—ní raib fíos aige cad ba maic do a rá ina taob—bí sé imite ar an tsiorraíoc an tráe san. Deannaict dílis Dé lena anam. B’ionad le Rosa cionus mar a fuair a scol-maigistir a cuir scolaiócta. B’ionad leis conas mar a fuair muintir Ros Cairbre a gcuir scolaiócta le linn a n-óige, mar bí an teanga Béarla acu ní b’fearr ná mar a bí sí ag alán daoine leis le linn d’ac beir ag sgríob—daoine a raib ainm o’deaicais orca. Agus i dteannta an Béarla a beir ag muintir Ros Cairbre bí an gaeilge go nádúrta

agus ar feabhas acu com maic: labrad na sagairt ón altóir an gaeilge agus craolairóis an soisceal i nGaeilge.

B’ionad leis nar a’deir sé conas mar a fuair muintir Ros Cairbre le linn óige a atar, a gcuir o’deaicais mar rugad iad le linn bac a beir ar o’deaicas in Éirinn. Ní raib na Scoileanna Náisiúnta sa tír go dtí gur rugad é féin. Bí scoileanna móta agus scoláirí bocta ar fuair na háite a rugad é. I rit an tsamraio bailio do na páistí le ceile. Fé na gclataca agus pésna crainn agus tugad na scoláirí bocta teagasc dóib. Sa ngeimhead bíod an scoil ar siúl acu i scioból nó in áit éigin le hais tigh feirmeora.

Agus b’é an scéal céanna é maidir le teagasc cúrsaí creidim. Bí sin crosta, leis. Bí bac ar na sagairt com maic leis na daoine coitianta. Ar fead d’ac céad bliain tar éis an creidim protastúnac a cur ar muintir na hÉireann, cuirtí pínail ar don sagart a mbeirtí air ag léam aifrinne; d’ac mbeirtí air an tarna huair tugtaí príosún do i dteannta pínaila, agus d’ac mbeirtí an triú huair air ba d’birt nó bás do é. Don gael a mbeirtí air ag éisteaict. Aifrinne cuirtí pínail trom air; d’ac mbeirtí an tarna huair air cuirtí a d’ac oiread pínaila air, agus nuair a méadaio an pínail agus ná hioctaí baintí a cuir talún den nGael agus díola do na Sasanaigh é. “Sin é an cúis,” a’deir Rosa, “go bfuil an díocur o’oreacta nó an traioisiún so ina coitlad i gcoir agus in aigne deoraite gael inniu—gur cailleadar féin agus a muintir a gcuir fearann agus a gcuir den tsaoil in Éirinn mar gell ar clai le creideam Críost.”

Bí beirt desna scoláirí bocta so i Ros Cairbre agus Rosa ina páiste. Domnall Ó hIarla da ruine acu

agus Domhnall Ó hÉigearthaigh an duine eile. Ba cuimhin leis a beit i o'tig sae duine acu, ac ní raib sé ag dul cun don duine díob ac ar feadh cúpla lá nó cúpla seachtain. Bíod a scoil ag sae duine acu ina bochtán tige féin. Tugairís teagasc dá feabhas dá gcuid scoláirí—scoláirí a mbíod eolas maith acu ar laoiín agus ar an nGreibis.

Is dóca go dtug Rosa timpeal sé bliana ag dul cun scoile Séam Uí Chuisín. Tamall tar éis báis Séam tug Rosa cuairt ar an scoil. O'féac sé ar an leabhar Rollaí a bíod ag Seán agus ní raib a ainm le feicsint ann i ndiaid Nollaig na bliana 1844. B'sin le rá go raib sé ag dul ar scoil ón uair a bí sé sé bliana o'aois go dtí go raib sé trí bliana déag. Fagann Rosa a óige anso agus tagann sé an fadó le bliain a 1858 le tagairt do lá le Seán eile dá raib sé i Ros Cairbre. Scríob fear darb ainm Séamus Ó Matúna ó Droichead na Bannan cuige go raib uair bualaí leis cun cúrsaí náisiúntaéda a ríom-aí is a cur trena céile leis. Dúirt sé gur maith an lá, lá le Seán, i Ros le haíad an ionaid coinne mar go mbead roint maith daoine cruinníde ann agus ná caitead éinne don droc-amras leo. Buailtead le céile ann an lá san. Tugad sead ag seancaas agus ansan tugad aghaid ar páirc na Mainistreaí. Bí bothránais, cláirínis agus daill ann i nsaé ball agus iad go léir ag éileam na déirce. I nGaeilge a bí a mór-formór san éileam. Stao Rosa agus a cara laistiar de duine acu a bí ina suí ar an bpéar agus a cosa tinne sínte amad uair. Bí an guth go láirín aige agus an Gaeilge go líopa aige leis. Dúirt an Matúnae nár airis sé agus nár léam se don ruo sa teangain Gaeilge com binn ná com áluinn riam. Ansan tarraing sé cuige

a leabhar nótaí agus a peann luaidhe cun paidreaca déirce an cláirínis a scríob. Ac nár tug compánac bócair don scláiríneac fé ndeara an fuadar a bí fén Matúnae agus nár tug cogar don cláiríneac O'iompuis an cláiríneac ar Rosa agus ar a caraí agus dúirt leo a mbótar a tabairt ortu. Focal eile ní cuirfead sé as go n-imeoidís.

Bí siopa éadais ag an Séamas Ó Matúna so i nDroichead na Bannan. Dearcair do t-aos Ó Matúna, ollam le Gaeilge i gColáiste na Tríonóide i mBaile Áta Cliat b'ead é. Cuair sé go dtí an Ástráil sa mbliain 1863 agus o'imis Liam Ó Cearbail a raib bádús sa tsráid mór Cuair i gCorcais aige in éinead leis. Bíodar ar an gcéad dream i ndeisceart Éireann a cuair i nGluaisead Séamais Stiopáin. B'é Séamus Ó Matúna a baist "an Seabac mar leas ainm ar Séamus Stiopáin. "An Seabac Siúlac" a tugtaí sa tsean-aimsir ar pánaire a b'ead pógarca nó ar teicead. Nuair a bunaíod Gluaisead na bPíníní, taistil an Stiopánae formór na tíre ar cois. Tug se oíde ar iostas sa tig ag Rosa i Scribhirín agus bí binn a cos closta agus com dearg le puit. Tarla an teagmáil seo i mbliain a 1858, roir Rosa agus Stiopáin.

Táinig an droc-saol ansan. Tosnaigh an mead ag tead ar na barraí prátaí i mbliain 1845 sa tír seo; agus nuair a connac tiarnaí talún Éireann sin gabad cuicu na barraí aruir agus deinead a gcuid féin díob i ngeall leis an gcíos a bí ag tead cuicu ósna tionóintí. Mar sin de bí na daoine a saotraigh na barraí úo pásta fé ocras agus ní raib i ndán díob ac an bás nó a dtír agus a mbailte dúcais o'págaínt. Scaipead na mílte teaglac agus leagad na mílte tig comnaite. Bí teaglac

Rosa féin ar ceann desna teaghlais a dtáinig an críoch san ordu.

Anso a'deir Rosa go dtugann daoine blianta an "gorta" ar na blianta úd in Éirinn. "Níl i gcaint den tsórt san ach traclaís," a'deir sé. "Ní raib don 'gorta' in Éirinn; ní bíonn gorta in don tír a t'ugann an oiread toraí in aghaid na bliana agus a cothaíonn na daoine a com-naíonn sa tír i rith na bliana san. Sa mbliain 1845 bí 9,000,000 duine in Éirinn; agus bíod is gur teip an barra prátaí, bí na barraí eile go maith, ionas go raib go leor arúir agus beithíoch sa tír cun

9,000,000 duine fé trí a coimeád ina mbeataí. Fuair Sasana agus g'éasa Sasana in Éirinn greim ar na hábhair bíod seo agus cuireadh ar lear iad. Ansan d'foghraíodh agus cuireadh amach ar fuair an domhan móir go raib an tír seo fé 'gorta.' Ní raib don gorta sa tír seo ach bí Rialtas Sasana in Éirinn ag déanam fogla a foiréigin ar gaeil. D'é breath Coistí Crónaera a togaíod cun éistead le cúiseana ar daoine a fuair teas marb ná 'gurb é Rialtas Sasana a bí cionntach lena mbás.' Cuirfeadh síos ar an tréimse úd i gcaibíoil eile den 'Cuirne.' "



Raodarc ar an gcalafort in Oileán Cléire atá cónsaraíod do thuitimh na Rosa.

THE FIVE
GLORIOUS MYSTERIES
OF THE
ROSARY

PAINTED BY
RICHARD KING

Our reproductions of Richard King's Five Glorious Mysteries of the Rosary in this Annual completes a set of the Fifteen Mysteries which he has painted for three consecutive issues. The same enthusiasm will, we are certain, greet these five reproductions as acclaimed the others. Again the artist finds his inspiration in the Scripture text and this ensures for his work the important quality of truth. His strong, rich colours wonderfully alive, arrest our attention almost as much as the disposition of the figures; both together contribute to what we may call an ethereal quality that gives the effect of sublimity. Sublimity, we are in no doubt, should invest every work of sacred art. Richard King's technique and perceptiveness enable him to inform all his sacred subjects with an unworldly radiance.

Accompanying the paintings in praise of the Mother of God are translations of some early Irish verses. The sentiments they express have an elemental reverence in speaking about her who is the Mother of the Incarnate Word. The unknown authors speak with the profound dignity of men of faith.

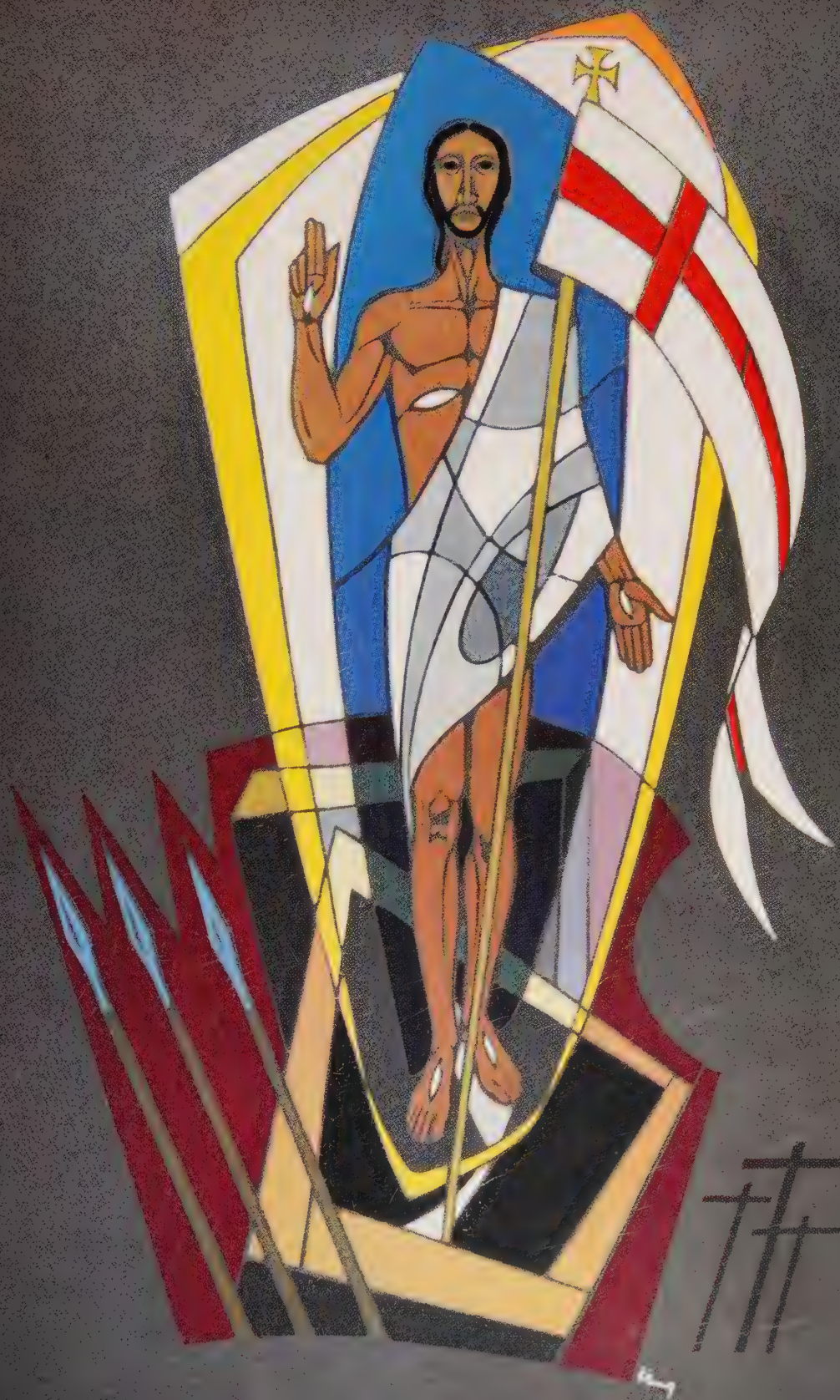
EARLY IRISH VERSES — IN TRANSLATION —

INVOCATION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

(Translation of a very early Irish poem—perhaps as early as the sixth century)

Gentle Mary, good maiden,
give us help,
thou casket of the Lord's body,
and shrine of all mysteries.

Queen of all who reign,
thou chaste holy maiden,
pray for us that, through thee,
our wretched transgression be forgiven.





Merciful forgiving one
who hast the grace of the pure Spirit,
join us in entreating the just-judging King
on behalf of his fair fragrant children.

O branch of Jesse's tree
from the fair hazel-grove,
pray for me
that I have forgiveness of my wrongful sin.

O Mary, loveliest jewel,
thou hast saved our race,
O truly lovely light,
O garden for kings.

Shining one, gleaming one,
who practisest bright chastity,
beauteous resplendent golden coffer,
thou holy one from Heaven!

Mother of truth,
thou hast excelled everyone;
pray with me to thy Firstborn
that he save me at Judgement.

Thou who art victorious,
securely set, retinued, and strong,
pray with me to powerful Christ,
who is thy Father and thy Son.

O Glorious choice star,
O tree in bloom,
mighty torch whom all would choose,
sun who warmest everyone,

O ladder of the great fence
through which step the pure,
mayst thou be our safeguard
to glorious Heaven!

O city fair and fragrant,
the King did choose thee;
mighty was the guest who dwelt in thy womb
for three times three months,

Choice door through which was born in flesh
the shining sun,
whom all would choose,
Jesus Son of the living God,

*For the sake of the beauteous One
who was conceived in thy womb,
for the sake of the Only-begotten
who is High-king everywhere,*

*For the sake of his cross,
nobler than all crosses,
for the sake of the burial
by which he was buried in a rock,*

*For the sake of his resurrection
by which he arose before everyone,
for the sake of his holy household
coming from all places to judgement,*

*I pray, while life lasts,
that thou be our safeguard
to the kingdom of the good Lord,
and that we go with dear Jesus.*

THE PROTECTING CORSELET OF MARY

(translation of an Irish hymn of the twelfth century)

*Direct me how to praise thee,
Though I am not a master of poetry,
O, thou of the angelic countenance, without fault,
Thou has given the milk of thy breast to save me.*

*I offer myself under thy protection,
O, loving mother of the only Son,
And under thy protecting shield I place my body,
My heart, my will, and my understanding.*

*I am a sinner full of faults,
I beseech of thee, and pray thee do it,
O, woman physician of the miserable diseases,
Behold the many ulcers of my soul.*

*O, Temple of the three persons,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
I invoke thee to come to visit me
At the hour of my judgement and of my death.*

*O, Queen to whom it hath been granted by the King,
The eternal Father, out of the abundance of his love,
As inheritance to be the mother,
I implore thy assistance to save me.*



O, Vessel who carried the lamp,
More luminous than the sun,
Draw me under thy shelter into the harbour,
Out of the transitory ship of the world.

O, flower of beauty, O, mother of Christ,
O, lover of peace and mildness,
I pray thee hear me, may it ne'er occur to me
In any trial to forsake thee.

O, Queen who refuseth not any person
Who is pure in his deeds, morals, actions
Beseech thee Christ to put me
(From the wily demons) amidst the saints.

O, Queen of the saints, of the virgins, of the angels,
O, honeycomb of eternal life,
All-surpassing power, presumptuous valour
Goes not far without thee.

I am under thy shelter amidst the brave,
O, protecting shield, without being injured by their blows,
O, Holy Mary, if thou wilt hear thy suppliant,
I put myself under the shelter of thy shield.

When falling in the slippery path,
Thou art my smooth supporting hand-staff,
O, Virgin from the southern clime,
May I go to heaven to visit thee.

There is no hound in fleetness or in chase,
North wind or rapid river,
As quick as the mother of Christ to the bed of death,
To those who are entitled to her kindly protection.

O, heart without sin, O, bosom without guile,
O, Virgin woman who hath chosen sanctity,
In thee I place my hope of salvation
From the eternal torture of the — pain.

O, Mary, gentle, beautiful,
O, Meekness, mild and modest
I am not tired of invoking thee,
Thou art my guarding staff in danger.

Turn thine eye, O woman friend,
Upon the distressed nobles of Erin,
To them restore [the happiness of] their lives,
And obtain [for them] from the Eternal Father:

*Every sinner who has fallen into trouble,
Of their numbers and is in need of succour:
Redeem them, O Virgin woman,
They are in misery until you do it.*

*To the true faith without dissimulation
May the kings of the world be obedient,
Through the invocation of Mary, which is not weak,
And may they renounce the false religion.*

*To those who are in the pit of pain in fire [heat],
Whose portion is of evil,
Deign thy relief to them, O Mary,
And Amen, say O cleric.*

*Every woman sick in childbirth,
If she has this, or that it be read for her,
She will get relief by the grace of God,
And of Mary Mother of the only Son.*

*Going on a sea voyage,
Or going to a single-handed combat,
Whosoever of the two hath justice on his side
Shall return alive without danger.*

*Every person who recites it from memory,
And hears it with due reverence,
And with sweet devotion to Mary,
Shall get relief and protection.*

*When you are rising in the morning,
And when going into bed recite it,
And you shall have Mary as your friend
To redress all your grievances.*

*A house is seldom burned
Which is under protection of the shield
Of the Virgin Mary,
If appropriate reverence be given to her.*

*Many are the countless virtues
Of the protecting shield corselet of Mary,
If we be in the state of grace,
And pray to her at all times with devotion.*





The Joyce Brothers of Glenosheen

By

MANNIX JOYCE

GLENOSHEEN is a picturesque little village in the Ballahoura country in south-east Limerick. Its fame, however, does not rest solely on its beauty, for Glenosheen was the native place of two men who won distinction in their day and who are still well remembered. These were the brothers Patrick Weston Joyce and Robert Dwyer Joyce.

Patrick Weston (P. W.) Joyce was a man of many parts, teacher, educationalist, translator, historian, topographer, collector of folk music; while Robert Dwyer Joyce, who qualified as a doctor, is best remembered as a song writer, a song writer in whose verses we find frequent mention of the lovely Glenosheen countryside—

Afar in the vales of green 'Houra my heart

*lingers all the day long,
Mid the dance of light-footed maidens,
with the music of Ounanaar's song;
Where the steep hills uprise all empurpled
with the bloom of the bright heather bells,
Looking down on their murmuring daughters,
the blue streams of Houra's wild dells.*

Sunday, 16 June, 1968, saw a simple but very impressive tribute paid to the Joyce brothers in their native village. Members of the Cork city branch of *Comhaltas Ceoltóirí Éireann*, who had originated the praiseworthy idea of visiting places associated with collectors of Irish music, decided to visit Glenosheen on that day. They were joined by members of the Kilmallock *Comhaltas* branch, for what was intended to be an informal session of

traditional music that would be held in the open and that night, its promoters hoped, attract an audience of forty or fifty people. Instead of that, a crowd of hundreds of people came along, all anxious to join in this tribute to the Joyce brothers.

It was a beautiful sunny day, the kind of day that organisers of outdoor functions are blessed with only once or twice in a lifetime. And the beauty of the day was only in keeping with the beauty of the setting. The little village of Glenosheen, comprising no more than a handful of houses, stretches along a very short by-road that climbs from the Ardpatrik-Kildorrery road to the Green Wood-Glenanaar-Mallow road. There were crowds all along that short, linking by-road, and sitting on the high stone walls and on the roadside fences; and from the crossroads on the Ardpatrik-Kildorrery road one looked up the sloping village street to the great wooded bulk of Seefin (*Suí Finn*), the highest point of the Ballahouras, which rises 1,702 feet straight over the village, and which to-day provided a majestic back-cloth to the proceedings. And all around were other hills and glens and woods and streams, with brown Castleoliver conspicuous on its height in ancient Clonodfoy. The eyes never ceased to roam up the hillsides and down the glens; but the ears remained willing prisoners of the haunting music of violin, pipe and flute that was the musicians' special tribute to the Joyce who was a collector of music and the Joyce who was a singer of songs.

Michael Joyce, a brother of P.W. and Robert Dwyer Joyce, compiled a very interesting pedigree of the family in 1898. The family, according to this pedigree, was descended from Seán Mór Seoighe (Joyce), who came from the Joyce Country in Galway to Lixnaw in Kerry about the year 1680. It appears that this Seán Mór was employed as a steward by the Earl of Lixnaw, who gave him a large tract of

land for his own use in the Lixnaw district, and also a further considerable amount of land in the Athlacca district in County Limerick.

The arrival of a Galway Joyce in Lixnaw may be accounted for by the fact that there was a surprisingly large amount of friendly communication between the Lixnaw district and West Connacht in the seventeenth and preceding centuries, as Stiofán O hAnracháin notes in his book, *Caint an Bhaile Dhuibh* (p. 5). O'Malleys, for example, were frequent visitors to the Earls of Lixnaw (Fitzmaurices). These numerous Connacht visitors came by sea, and probably transferred to smaller boats which were able to sail up the four miles of the Cashen river which brought them within a mile or two of Lixnaw.

Seán Mór had a son named Risteárd Caol, and he in turn had a son named Bearnárd Rua, who was married to a Bríd Mac Auliffe from Newmarket, Co. Cork. Sometime about the year 1750, Bearnárd Rua and his wife, and his son Gearóid Mór, with perhaps other members of the family, came to live to Athlacca. Gearóid Mór married Maryanne Hogan of Athlacca. Their eldest son Robert became known as Roibeárd an Gaeilgeoir, presumably on account of his more than usual proficiency in his native language, Irish.

In 1783 Roibeárd an Gaeilgeoir went to Glenosheen, and settled on a piece of mountainy land he had acquired by marrying Anne Howard, daughter of John Howard, or Seán Rua Ó hIomhair, as he was known to his contemporaries. Seán Rua Ó hIomhair had originally belonged to Kinsale, but after his house had been accidentally burned he came to Kilfinane on the invitation of his first cousin, James Bible, and settled there. Seán Rua had four sons, Garrett, Richard, James and John, who were all skilled musicians. Indeed P. W. Joyce himself attributed his love and ear for music to

the Howard blood that was in him.

Michael Joyce, the compiler of the Joyce pedigree, remembered Roibeárd an Gaeilgeoir Joyce well, and tells us, "He was a tall handsome man, blessed with a fine voice and well versed in Irish history and legend and all the delightful traditions of the country." He died in 1828.

Roibeárd an Gaeilgeoir had a son, Garrett Joyce (the father of P. W., Robert Dwyer and Michael Joyce) and he too, as were those of his line who preceded him, was distinguished by an epithet, in this case "Garrett the Scholar." This was the name given him by one of the fraternity of the New Lights whom he had vanquished in a disputation on religion in the year 1829. Public disputation of this kind was common at that period. Garrett was a shoemaker by trade, and in addition to his interest in religion he was very fond of poetry and could, it was said, repeat the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* with but very few mistakes.

The census return for 1821, when Garrett was living in Ballyorgan, has the following entry: "Joyce: Garrett Joyce (27) shoemaker; occasionally employed. Betty Joyce (27) wife. Michael Joyce (3) son. John Joyce (1) son."

As a matter of interest it might be mentioned that the census return gives "flax spinner" as the occupation of several people in Ballyorgan at that time.

Although he called him Garrett Barry, it is almost certain that it was to his own father, Garrett the Scholar, that P. W. Joyce was referring in *English as we speak it in Ireland* (pp. 314, 315) when, commenting on the use of the term *Roman* in many parts of Ireland to denote a Roman Catholic, he wrote:—

"Sixty or seventy years ago controversial discussions—between a Catholic on the one hand and a Protestant on the other—were very common. I witnessed many when I was a boy—to my great delight. Garrett Barry, a Roman Catholic, locally noted as a controversialist, was

arguing with Mick Cantillon, surrounded by a group of delighted listeners. At last Garrett, as a final clincher, took up the Bible, opened it at a certain place and handed it to his opponent with: 'Read that heading out for us now if you please.' Mick took it up and read, 'St. Paul's Epistle to the *Romans*.' 'Very well,' says Garrett: 'now can you show me in any part of the Bible 'St. Paul's Epistle to the *Protestants*?' This, of course, was a down blow; and Garrett was greeted with a great hurrah by the Catholic part of his audience. This story is in *Knocknagow* but the thing occurred in my neighbourhood and I heard about it long before *Knocknagow* was written."

As I have already remarked, the Garrett Barry of this story was most likely none other than P. W. Joyce's own father, Garrett Joyce, Garrett the Scholar. Garrett the Scholar was a staunch defender of the elder Faith, and was well equipped for disputation, having committed to memory all the arguments put forward in the famous public controversy that took place in Dublin in April, 1827, between Father Thomas Maguire, parish priest of Inismagragh in the diocese of Kilmore, and the Reverend Mr. Pope from Co. Cavan. The fame of this debate, in which the victory went to Father Maguire, spread across the length and breadth of Ireland. The debate was published in booklet form, and a County Clare poet, Donncha Woulfe, sang about it:—

*Le briathra bríomhara beoil
De Phoe go brách rinn ceo*

(With fluent words of mouth
Confounded Pope forever).

The ecumenical spirit was not yet abroad in those days, and perhaps it would be too much to expect that it would in an Ireland on which the Penal night had so lately lifted. The New Lights, one of whom

was out-argued by Garrett Joyce, were particularly active in the Askeaton district in the diagonally opposite corner of the county from Glenosheen. In Askeaton and the surrounding parishes they began a vigorous proselytising campaign under the leadership of the Reverend Richard Murray, a minister from the North of Ireland. This campaign was looked upon with disfavour by the local Protestants, who enjoyed very good relations with their Catholic neighbours. In a note in *Abhráin an Reachtúire* (p. 115) Doctor Douglas Hyde has this reference to the New Lights:

"The New Lights seem to have been some religious sect. Burns alludes to them in his poem *The Twa Herds, or, the Holy Tulzie*. There is a long poem in English, *The New Lights of Askeaton*, written by, I think, a carpenter, after the Irish form of versification. I found it in Galway. It consisted of eight verses . . ." Doctor Hyde gives three verses, the first of which goes as follows:—

*Ye muses now come AID me in admonishing
the PAGANS,
The New Lights of ASKEATON, whose
FATE I do deplore;
From innocence and REASON they are
led to CONDEMNATION,
Their faith they have VIOLATED,
the OCCASION of their woe.
The Mass they have FORSAKEN,
their source and RENOVATION,
To free them from DAMNATION and
SATAN'S violent yoke;
The means of their SALVATION at
the great accounting TABLE,
When mountains shall be SHAKEN and
NATIONS overthrown.*

(Note: The words in capitals indicate the assonantal pattern of the poem. A person familiar with Irish poetry would instinctively emphasise the vowel sound, corresponding to Irish "E," in each case, and

would of course pronounce "Askeaton" as if spelt "Askayton" and "reason" as if spelt "rayson").

And all the work of poetic condemnation was not left to the anonymous versifier from whom I have quoted, for Father Liam Mac Gearailt, parish priest of Newcastle West; Séamas Ó Caoinleabháin, of Strand, near Newcastle West, Eoghan Caomhánach of Kilmallock, and Seán Ó Domhnaill of Athlacca, wrote poems in Irish against the New Lights. It was the last muster of the Gaelic poets of Limerick.

Garrett Joyce ("the Scholar"), the recalling of whose verbal victory over the spokesman of the New Lights, caused us to digress somewhat from our subject, was married to Elizabeth O'Dwyer, who was born at Keale, in the parish of Glenroe, in 1795. She bore him eight sons. Of these, two became famous: Patrick, who was born in 1827 and Robert who was born in 1830. Robert later added his mother's name to his own, and in future was to be known as Robert Dwyer Joyce. About the same time Patrick added the name of his maternal grandmother to his name; hence the name Patrick Weston Joyce.

That name Weston recalls a romantic episode. John O'Dwyer, the maternal grandfather of the Joyces, belonged to a fairly well-off family. His father was William O'Dwyer and his mother a Miss Casey. John was an only son, and was partly spoilt by his mother, who sent him to school in Dublin for three years, where there it is not known for certain, but it may have been Trinity College. His mother wished him to be fully accomplished, but John was more interested in enjoying life than in overburthening himself with learning.

There was at that time in Kilfinane a famous dancing academy for young ladies, and among those attending the academy was one Mary Rosaleen Weston, daughter of a fiery old warrior, Major Weston, of Ballinacurra Weston near Limerick City.

John O'Dwyer saw her, fell in love with her, and the pair eloped and were married. O'Dwyer, if captured, would in all probability have been hanged, for the Major vowed vengeance on the papist who had run away with his daughter. But O'Dwyer had a powerful champion in the person of his neighbour, Captain Oliver of Clonod-foy (now Castleoliver), who used his influence not only to mollify the anger of the major but to effect a reconciliation between himself and O'Dwyer as well. O'Dwyer's wife embraced the religion of her husband and became a very devout Catholic. Her husband died at the early age of thirty-six, leaving two sons, William and John, and his daughter Elizabeth, to mourn him. The widow O'Dwyer later married a man named O'Donnell. She died in 1838, in her seventieth year, and is buried in the ancient cemetery on the summit of Ardpatrik hill.

P. W. Joyce was born in Ballyorgan in 1827. Ballyorgan is a village situated about a mile east of Glenosheen, and the Joyces must have been domiciled there for some years—they were there for the 1821 census—before returning to Glenosheen, where they were again living by 1830, and where the future historian grew up.

Glenosheen is an interesting little place. It had a colony of Palatines, descendants of some of the 3,000 Germans who had come as refugees from the Rhenish Palatinate to Ireland in 1709. The largest Palatine settlement was that on the Southwell estate near Rathkeale in County Limerick; and it was from there that a number of Palatine families came to Glenosheen, as well as to nearby Ballyorgan and Garran-leash, on the invitation of the local landlord, the Right Honourable Silver Oliver. P. W. Joyce remembered hearing the following lines being recited by neighbours:

*In the year seventeen hundred and nine,
In came the brass-coloured Palatine,
From the ancient banks of the Swabian Rhine.*

In Glenosheen the land given to the Palatines, was unoccupied, so that there were no evictions or clearances to make room for them and, consequently, no ill-feelings among their Irish neighbours. In his book, *The Wonders of Ireland* (p. 205) Joyce says:

"In my early time Glenosheen had a mixture of Catholics and Protestants (chiefly Palatine) about half and half and we got on very well together: in recalling the kindly memories of my boyhood companions, Palatines come up as well as Catholics."

When they first came to Glenosheen, the Palatines he tells us had to clear large areas of wood and scrub to prepare their little farms for cultivation. And at that time, and for many years subsequently, their dress, and even their shoes—with the exception of the soles—were made of canvas; they ate *sauer-kraut*, and they slept between two feather beds, that is, between a feather tick and a heavy feather quilt, the latter being of the type that is still common in many parts of Germany, and which serves as a combined sheet, blanket and quilt. Mostly they were Methodists, but they generally attended the Protestant church. They were steady, sober and industrious: good farmers, understood gardening, kept bees, and were fond of making pastry.¹

The principal Palatine surnames in the Glenosheen district were Altines or Alton, Barkman, Bovenizer, Delmege, Fizzell, Glaizier, Heck, Ligier (Ligonier), Ruttle, Shoulitiss, Strough, Stuffle (Stoffel) Young.²

Of considerable interest is a description of his native district that Joyce wrote while still in his early twenties. Apart from the pleasing picture it unfolds, the description shows how every feature of the landscape, as well as the place-names and the doings of the people had impressed themselves indelibly upon him.

"The Ballahoura Mountains," he wrote, "extend for several miles on the borders

of the counties of Cork and Limerick. Commencing near Charleville (now officially Ráth Luirc), they stretch away towards the east, consisting of a succession of single peaks with lone and desolate valleys lying between, covered with heath or coarse grass, where for ages the silence has been broken only by the cry of the heath-cock or the yelp of the fox echoing among the rocks that are strewn in wild confusion over the sides of the mountains. They increase gradually in height towards the eastern extremity of the range where they are abruptly terminated by the majestic Seefin, which projecting forwards—its back to the west and its face to the rising sun—seems placed there to guard the desolate solitudes behind it.

“Towards the east it overlooks a beautiful and fertile valley, through which a little river winds its peaceful course to join the Funsheon; on the west ‘Blackrock of the Eagle’ rears its front—a sheer precipice — over Lyre-na-Freaghawn, a black heath-covered glen that divides the mountains. On the south it is separated by Lyre-na-Grena, the ‘valley of the sun,’ from ‘the Long Mountain’ which stretches far away towards Glenanaar; and immediately in front, on the opposite side of the valley, rises Barna Geeha, up whose sides cultivation has crept almost to its summit. Just under the eastern face of Seefin, at its very base and extending even a little way up the mountain steep, reposes the peaceful little village of Glenosheen.”

And then, at the end of that introduction, he sings his song of praise to Glenosheen:

“Gentle reader, go if you can on some sunny morning in summer or autumn—let it be Sunday morning if possible—to the bottom of the valley near the bank of the little stream and when you cast your eyes up to the village and the great green hill over it, you will admit that not many places even in our own green island can produce a prettier or more cheerful prospect. There is the little hamlet with its white-

washed cottages gleaming in the morning beams and from each a column of curling smoke rises slowly straight up towards the blue expanse. The base of the mountain is covered with wood and several clumps of great trees are scattered here and there through the village, so that it appears imbedded in a mass of vegetation, its pretty cottages peeping out from among the foliage.

“The land on each side rises gently towards the mountain, its verdure interspersed by fields of blossomed potatoes laughing with joy, or of bright yellow corn, or more beautiful still, little patches of flax clothed in their Sunday dress of light blue. Seefin rises directly over the village, a perfect cone; white patches of sheep are scattered here and there over its bright sunny face; and see, far up towards the summit, that long line of cattle, just *after leaving* Lyre-na-Grena, where they were driven to be milked, and grazing quietly along towards Lyre-na-Freaghawn. The only sounds that catch your ear are, the occasional crow of a cock, or the exulting cackle of geese, or the softened low of a cow may reach you, floating down the hillside; or the cry of the herdsman, as with earnest gestures he endeavours to direct the movements of the flock.

“But hear that merry laugh. See, it comes from the brow of the hill where the women of the village are just coming into view, returning from Lyre-na-Grena after milking their cows. Each carries a pail in one hand and a spangle in the other, as they approach the village, descending the steep pathway—the ‘Dray-Road,’ as it is called — that leads from ‘the Lyre,’ a gabble of voices mingled with laughter floats over the village, as merry and as happy as ever rung on human ear. Observe now they arrive at the village, the group becomes thinner as they proceed down the street and at length all again is quietness.

"Happy village! Pleasant scenes of my childhood! How vividly at this moment do I behold that green hill-side, as I travel back in imagination to the days of my boyhood when I and my little brother Robert and our companions—all now scattered over this wide world—ranged joyful among the glens in search of birds' nests, or climbed the rocks at its summit, eager to plant ourselves on its dizzy elevation . . ."³

P.W. Joyce received his early education in some of the hedge schools that were numerous in his part of the country. One such school that he attended was in Fanningstown near his home, and the master there was a man named Conor Leahy, "a very rough diamond indeed though a good teacher and not over severe." One day one of the pupils darted breathlessly into the school to announce that Father Bourke was on his way there. Master and pupils were equally afraid of Father John, a tall stern-looking man with heavy brows. The master instantly bounced up and warned his pupils to be on their very best behaviour while the priest was present. He happened to be standing near the fire-place and he wound up his exhortation by thumping the hob with his fist and declaring, "By this stone if one of ye opens your mouth while the priest is here, I'll knock his brains out after he's gone away." The threat had the desired effect, though in fact, the fear in which Father Bourke was held was apparently misplaced for he was at heart a gentle and kindly man.⁴

One of the ablest of the Munster teachers at that time was a Patrick Murray who kept a school in the upper storey of the market house in Kilfinane. He was particularly eminent in English Grammar and Literature. P. W. Joyce went to his school for one year, when he was very young, and he tells us that "I am afraid I was looked upon as very slow, especially in his pet subject Grammar. I never could be

got to parse correctly such complications as 'I might, could, would, or should have been loving'".

Telling of one of the burning questions that exercised the learning and logic and academic energies of a section of the hedge schoolmasters of the period Joyce says:

"There was one subject that long divided the teachers of Limerick and Tipperary into two hostile camps of learning—the verb *to be*. There is a well-known rule of grammar that 'the verb *to be* takes the same case after it as goes before it.' One party headed by the two Dannahys, father and son, very scholarly men of north Limerick, held that the verb *to be* governed the case following; while the other, at the head of whom was Mr. Patrick Murray of Kilfinane in South Limerick, maintained that the correspondence of the two cases, after and before, were mere *agreement*, not *government*. And they argued with as much earnestness as the Continental Nominalists and Realists of an older time."⁵

The young P. W. Joyce also attended school for a time in Kilmallock. Many years afterwards when describing in his book, *The Story of Ancient Irish Civilisation* (p. 47) how the students in the old monastic schools frequently studied in the open, he was to recall his schooldays in Kilmallock.

"I saw the same custom in full swing" he wrote, "in some of the lay schools before 1847. Many a time I prepared my lesson—with some companions—sitting on the grass beside the old abbey in Kilmallock or perched on the top of the ivy-mantled wall."

He also spent a year attending a science school kept by a teacher named Simon Cox in Galbally. It was a rough sort of school he tells us, but mathematics and the use of the globes were well taught. There were about forty students, and of these half a dozen, including Joyce, were boys; the rest were men, mostly young, but a few in middle life. These latter were schoolmasters — some of them "Poor

Scholars" — bent on improving their knowledge of science in preparation for the opening of schools in their own districts. When school was over in the evenings the "Poor Scholars" all set out in different directions and called at the farmers' houses to ask for lodgings, and rarely were there refusals. In return for food and lodgings however the "Poor Scholars" were expected to help the children of the house at their lessons.⁶

In his account of the Galbally school Joyce marvels at how he escaped being a smoker after his sojourn there! Most of the "scholars" smoked, so that the class room was never quite clear of a fragrant blue haze. He recalled an occasion when a class of ten, of which he was one, were all sitting round the master and all, both master and scholars, except himself, were smoking.⁷

The child is father to the man, and we can surely see something of the great lover and collector of Irish music in the following delightful personal note that Joyce introduces into his description of the Galbally school:

"I was the delight and joy of that school," he wrote, "for I generally carried in my pocket a little fife from which I could roll off jigs, reels, hornpipes, hop-jigs, song tunes, etc. without limit. The school was held in a good-sized room in the second storey of a house of which the landlady and her family lived in the kitchen and bedrooms beneath—on the ground floor. Some dozen or more of the scholars were always in attendance in the mornings half-an-hour or so before the arrival of the master, of whom I was sure to be one—what could they do without me?—and then out came the fife and they cleared the floor for a dance.

It was simply magnificent to see and hear those athletic fellows dancing on the bare boards with their thick-soled, well-nailed heavy shoes—so as to shake the whole house. And not one in the lot was more

joyous than I was; for they were mostly good dancers and did full justice to my spirited strains. At last in came the master; there was no cessation, and he took his seat, looking on complacently 'till that bout was finished when I put up my fife and the serious business of the day was commenced."⁸ One wonders what the people who lived on the ground floor thought of the thick-soled, well-nailed, heavy boots beating time to the music upstairs.

The best conducted school Joyce attended was one kept by a master named John Condon which was held in the upper storey of the market house in Mitchelstown and was attended by Protestants as well as Catholics. Mr. Condon taught science, including mathematics, surveying and the use of the globes, and also geography and English grammar. He had an assistant who taught Greek and Latin, and Joyce was one of the few who attempted the double work of learning both science and classics. On Saturdays the students used go out to Mr. Condon's farm, complete with theodolite and chain, to learn surveying.⁹

P. W. Joyce remembered the hedge schools and their masters with affection and esteem. These schools had their origin in penal times in Ireland when the Catholic majority were forbidden by law to have schools of their own. But they established their schools despite the law and at great risk, rude cabins of clay or stone that were built in a few hours in some remote place, usually in the shelter of walls, groves or hedges. Hence the description "hedge schools," *scoileanna scairte* or *scoileanna cois clai*. The most numerous kind of hedge schools were those that provided elementary education; but there was also a kind, especially in the towns, that answered to what we now call secondary schools. Of the hedge schools Joyce attended, four were of the latter kind. Of the hedge schools in general he had this to say:

"These schools continued to exist down

to our own time, 'til they were finally broken up by the famine of 1847. In my own immediate neighbourhood were some of them, in which I received my early education; and I remember with pleasure several of my old teachers; rough and unpolished men many of them but excellent solid scholars and full of enthusiasm for learning—which enthusiasm they communicated to their pupils.”¹⁰

He referred to the schools again when he came to define “Bog-Latin” in *English as we speak it in Ireland* (p. 218), that book of his on which I have drawn for much of the biographical material so far set down in this article. This was what he had to say of “Bog Latin,” a term always used in a mocking or derogatory sense:—

“BOG LATIN: bad incorrect Latin; Latin that had been learned in the hedge schools among the bogs. This derisive and reproachful epithet was given in bad old times by pupils and others of the favoured, legal and endowed schools, sometimes with reason but oftener very unjustly. For those *bog* or hedge schools sent out numbers of scholarly men who afterwards entered the church or lay professions.”

There was extraordinary intellectual activity among the schoolmasters of Joyce's youth. Some of them, he tells us, thought and dreamed and talked of nothing else but learning. In their eyes learning was the main interest of the world. They often met on Saturdays to discuss and argue about knotty points of the classics or of science or grammar.¹¹

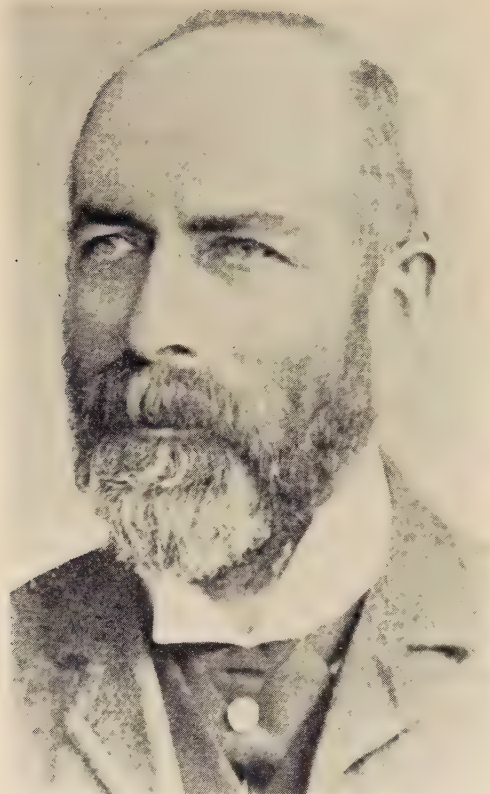
In the little but all too rare pieces of autobiographical writing that we find in Joyce's works we get some illuminating glimpses of the old, homespun life of the people in pre-Famine times in the Glenosheen countryside. This, of course, was the life he himself knew in his youth; the life that moulded him and left its impress upon him. He saw the generation that had crept out of the burrows when the priest-hunting days were no more. Free to wor-

ship openly again, they had built their first churches which, however, were called “chapels” to distinguish them from what were now the Protestant churches. They were primitive buildings, these post-Penal chapels, and Joyce says:

“When I was a boy I generally heard Mass in one of them, in Ballyorgan, Co. Limerick: clay floor, no seats, walls of rough stone unplastered, thatch not far above our heads. Just over the altar was suspended a level canopy of thin boards, to hide the thatch from the sacred spot: and on its under surface was roughly painted by some rustic artist a figure of a dove—emblematic of the Holy Ghost—which to my childish fancy was a work of art equal at least to anything ever executed by Michelangelo. Many and many a time I heard exhortations from that altar, sometimes in English, sometimes in Irish, by the Reverend Darby Buckley, the parish priest of Glenroe (of which Ballyorgan formed a part), delivered with such earnestness and power as to produce extraordinary effects on the congregation. You saw men and women in tears everywhere around you, and at the few words of unstudied peroration they flung themselves on their knees in a passionate burst of piety and sorrow. Ah, God be with Father Darby Buckley; a small man, full of fire and energy; somewhat overbearing and rather severe in judging of small transgressions; but all the same a great and saintly parish priest.”¹²

Joyce mentions Father Buckley again in a note on the march tune, *Here's a Health to Our Leader* in his *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs* (p. 87).

“I heard this tune,” he says, “played on the Highland pipes by Lewis O'Brien when I was very young. It was on a Sunday when good old Dr. Ryan, bishop of Limerick (who confirmed me), was coming to administer Confirmation. The parishioners led by their saintly and active parish priest, Father Darby Buckley, met



Patrick Weston Joyce

him in a body at the bridge of Barrabunoky with Lewis O'Brien at the head of the procession playing all the time with the grand blue ribbons flying from the tops of the pipes overhead. And in this manner we escorted the bishop in honour and glory to the chapel."

Joyce tells of an incident that occurred in the neighbouring parish of Kilfinane at the close of the eighteenth century, an incident which indicates clearly how submissive and servile the post-penal Catholic population still was in those years; due, no doubt, to the sense of insecurity that still pressed heavily on them. There was in Kilfinane at that time a large thatched chapel with a clay floor. Father John Sheehy was appointed parish priest of Kilfinane in 1798, and on the Monday

morning following his first Mass in the parish he was astounded to find a man threshing oats on the chapel floor. The man, a Catholic, had been sent there to do the threshing by his master, Captain Charles Oliver, descendant of a Cromwellian planter and local lord of the soil.

Father Sheehy, a big brawny man, and a man of courage and determination, ordered the workman to betake himself and his load of oats out of the chapel forthwith, and told him that if he ever came back with a load of oats or of anything else that he'd break his back for him, and that after that he'd go up and break his master's back for him too.

Oliver when he heard what had happened apparently thought it better not to try out conclusions with the sturdy parish priest, for in future he sent his corn elsewhere to be threshed. During the years that he had been sending his corn to the chapel to be threshed, Oliver would send a couple of workmen on Saturday evening to sweep the floor and clean the place for Sunday's Mass. Father Sheehy's predecessor had, it would seem, never objected to the use to which his church was being put but, as Joyce surmises, "It is likely enough indeed that he himself got a few scratches in his day from the penal laws and thought it as well to let matters go quietly."¹³

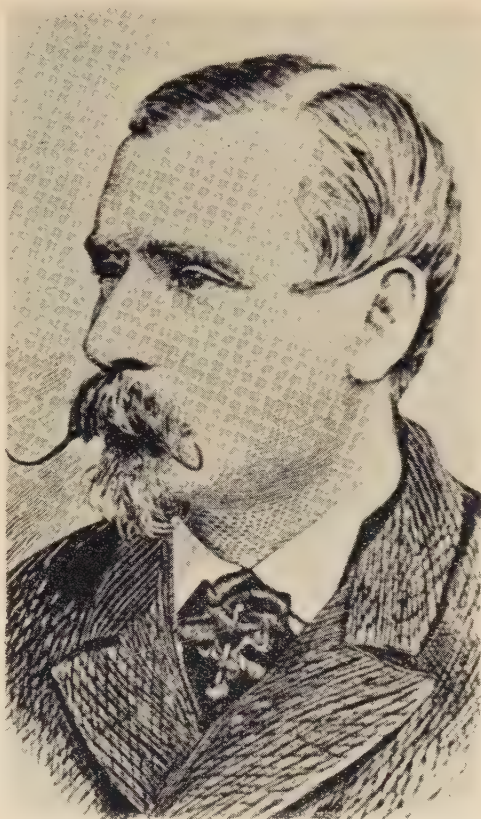
P. W. Joyce remembered Father Sheehy as a very old man. He died on 24th October, 1844, aged ninety-five, having been then forty-six years parish priest of Kilfinane.¹⁴

It took a man of some courage to stand up to Captain Oliver, for he virtually held the lives of the local people in his hands. He it was who had the well-loved United Irishman, William ("Staker") Wallis hanged in Kilfinane in the July of 1798, after first having him flogged through the streets of the town and at the fair of Ballinvreena. The air of the *Lament for Staker Wallis*, full of a people's heartbreak, is one of the loveliest of our *caointe*.

A term common in Joyce's youth was *Oliver's Summons*. At harvest time if Captain Oliver had any difficulty in getting the local men to work for him he would send round the district a couple of his servants with a horse and cart who seized some necessary article in each house—a spinning wheel, a bed, the pot, the single table, etc. and brought them all, body and bones, and kept them impounded. Not until somebody from the houses in question came and worked at the harvesting would the seized goods be returned. Oliver, however, paid his reluctant workmen for their labour.¹⁵

As a youth Joyce saw some of the famous cross-country hurling matches—designated *scuaibín*—between parish and parish, with at least five hundred engaged on each side; but that, he adds, was in the time of the eight millions—before 1847.¹⁶ The Famine of Black '47 was obviously the great watershed in his life and in the lives of his contemporaries. And he saw faction fights, with sticks and stones, between the "Three Year Olds" and the "Four Year Olds"¹⁷ at the fairs of Ardpark and Kildorrery; and enjoyed watching them, keeping a safe distance however for fear of a flying stone!¹⁸

There can have been very few others who, in the fleeting years of boyhood, absorbed so much of the heritage and the character and the very feel of their native place as did P. W. Joyce. Glenosheen and its people influenced him for all time; they enriched him and made him what he was. No matter where he might be in after years the inner eye was always focussed on the hoary height of Seefin, and the ear of memory still heard the loved songs and music and speech of the Ballahoura country. This is not a little surprising when we consider that for considerable parts of his boyhood he was away from his own immediate district, attending school in such places as Kilmallock, Galbally and Mitchelstown. And he was only eighteen



Robert Dwyer Joyce

years old when the Commissioners of National Education employed him as a teacher.

He quickly made his mark in his chosen profession and before long was appointed principal of the Model School in Clonmel. In 1856 he was one of the fifteen teachers selected and trained to reorganise the National School system.¹⁹ Though a busy man in many spheres, he found time to pursue a course of studies in Trinity College, Dublin, which earned him his B.A. degree in 1861 and his M.A. degree in 1864. And in 1870 Trinity awarded him the honorary degree of LL.D. Four years later he became Principal of the Board of Education's Training College in Marlborough Street, Dublin, which post he occupied until he retired in 1893. Drawing

on his own experience and observations as a teacher he wrote a number of books which were of much value to other teachers. They included *A Handbook of School Management*, *The Teaching of Manual Work in Schools*, *The Geography of the Counties of Ireland*, *How to Prepare for Civil Service Competitions*. By becoming Principal of the Training College in Dublin, P. W. Joyce had reached the highest office in his profession, no mean achievement for a product of the rural hedge schools. But despite his achievements in the field of education it is not as a teacher or educationalist he is best remembered to-day but as historian, collector of music, elucidator of place names and lifelong and loving recorder of the Irish past.

There was many a man in Ireland in the early years of this century who first became acquainted with Irish history in the pages of Joyce's *A Child's History of Ireland*, which was published in 1898. This book was formally approved for use in the national schools in Ireland by the Commissioners of National Education. A criticism sometimes levelled against the book is that its treatment of Irish history is too "safe," that it lacks colour and is not sufficiently inspiring. As against that one must remember that the attitude of the Commissioners to Irish nationality and Irish political aspirations had changed but little since the days when they had sanctioned for use in Irish schools a reading book that contained the following "poem" which the pupils were required to learn and commit to memory:—

*I thank the goodness and the grace
Which on my birth have smiled,
And made me in these Christian days
A happy English child.*

Joyce's great achievement surely was that he was able to write a history of Ireland that the Commissioners felt was objective enough to sanction for use in their schools

and yet, that this history, in so far as it could do so within the limits of five hundred pages, gave the pupils a complete and true account of the fortunes of their country from pagan times right up to the Famine period and the death of Daniel O'Connell. Joyce accomplished a minor revolution when he succeeded in putting a history of Ireland into the hands of the pupils in the national schools for the first time.

A Child's History of Ireland was an attractive little book and was copiously illustrated. The illustrations must have aroused much interest; indeed one might say that they comprised a history within a history. The frontispiece was a colour reproduction of the beautiful ninth-century illuminated Book of Mac Durnan; and among the illustrations in the body of the book were pictures of Irish leaders like Eoghan Rua O'Neill, O Sullivan Beara and Sarsfield; a picture of the field in Ballyneety where Sarsfield destroyed the siege train; facsimiles of the signatures of such figures as Gearóid Iarla, Shane O'Neill and Red Hugh O'Donnell.

In the course of his preface to the book Joyce said:

"... My constant aim has been to make the book easy to read and easy to understand. Above all I have tried to write soberly and moderately, avoiding exaggeration and bitterness, pointing out extenuating circumstances where it was just and right to do so, giving credit where credit is due and showing fair play all round. A writer may accomplish all this while sympathising heartily, as I do, with Ireland and her people. Perhaps this book, written as it is in such a broad and just spirit, may help to foster mutual feelings of respect and toleration among Irish people of different parties and may teach them to love and admire what is great and noble in their history, no matter where found. This indeed was one of the objects I kept steadily in view while writing it. When a

young citizen of Limerick and another of Derry read the account given here of the two memorable sieges I hope it is not too much to expect that the reader in each case, while feeling a natural pride in the part played by his own ancestors, will be moved to a just and generous admiration for those of the other side who so valiantly defended their homes. And the History of Ireland, 'though on the whole a very sad history, abounds in records of heroic deeds and heroic endurance, like those of Derry and Limerick, which all Irish people of the present day ought to look back to with pride and which all young persons should be taught to reverence and admire."

He further expressed a hope that his *Child's History of Ireland*, "though written primarily for children, might also be found interesting and instructive by older people." Finally, he said:

"It may not be unnecessary to say that, except in a few places where I quote, the narrative all through this book is original and not made up by adapting or copying the texts of other modern Irish histories. For good or for bad I preferred my way of telling the story."

Over 80,000 copies of *A Child's History of Ireland* were sold. It was adopted by the Australian Catholic Hierarchy as a text book for all their schools in Australia and New Zealand, and was also adopted by the Catholic School Board of New York. Another of Joyce's histories, *Outlines of the History of Ireland*, sold over 70,000 copies. These were the first popular histories of Ireland, and since they were sold and read in thousands, it would be interesting to know how much they contributed towards preparing the way for the great national revival that led, step by step, to Easter Week, 1916.

It certainly was not Joyce's fault if the majority of Irishmen were not acquainted with their country's history, for in addition to *A Child's History of Ireland* and *Outlines of the History of Ireland*, there came

also from his pen the following works: *A Short History of Ireland*, *The Story of Ancient Irish Civilisation*, *A Concise History of Ireland*, *A Reading Book in Irish History*, *A Social History of Ancient Ireland* (in two large volumes) and *A Smaller Social History of Ancient Ireland*. Incidentally, it might also be mentioned that he wrote *A Concise History of Rome*. As well, Joyce had set about making available Keating's seventeenth-century history of Ireland, *Foras Feasa ar Éirinn*, complete with English translation, notes and vocabulary. Only part I and II of the history was published, these in a volume entitled "*Keating*" for *Students of Gaelic*. It is thought that the reason for his discontinuing the editing and translating of Keating was the more ambitious decision of the Irish Texts Society to publish the *Foras Feasa* in four handsome volumes.²⁰

A Social History of Ancient Ireland is a work that has so far not been superseded, dealing as it does with a side of our history that has been almost completely neglected in the ordinary history books, which chiefly concentrate on military and political events. *A Social History of Ancient Ireland* treats of such things as the family in ancient Ireland; the house; food, fuel and light; dress and personal adornment; agriculture and pasturage; corn mills; public assemblies, sports and pastimes; social customs and observances; the Brehon Laws; art; medicine and medical doctors; death and burial. Joyce truly observed in his introduction to this work that "An important function of History is to depict social and domestic life. If we wish to obtain a clear view of the general state of any particular country in past times, we shall need to have a good knowledge of the people, high and low, rich and poor; their standards of civilisation, religion and learning; their virtues, and failings; their industries, occupations and amusements; their manners and customs; and the sort of life they led day by day in their homes."

Already, as early as 1879, Joyce had produced his *Old Celtic Romances*, retellings in English translation of twelve famous tales from Irish mythology: *The Fate of the Children of Lir*; *The Fate of the Children of Turenn*; *Connla of the Golden Hair*; *The Overflowing of Loch Neagh*; *The Voyage of Maoldun*; *The Fairy Palace of the Quicken Trees*; *The Pursuit of the Giolla Dacker and his Horse*; *The Pursuit of Dermot and Grania*; *The Chase of Slieve Cullinn*; *The Chase of Slieve Fuad*; *Oisín in Tír na nÓg*; *The Fate of the Sons of Usna*.

He wrote a very informative preface for this work, supplied helpful notes and appended a list of proper names with their original Irish forms. In the preface Joyce observed that

"Scraps and fragments of some of these tales have been given to the world in popular publications, by writers who not being able to read the originals took their information from printed books in the English language. But many of these specimens have been presented in a very unfavourable and unjust light—distorted to make them look *funny* and their characters debased to the mere modern conventional stage Irishman. There is none of this silly and odious vulgarity in the originals of these fine old tales which are high and dignified in tone and feeling—quite as much so as the old Romantic tales of Greece and Rome."

He went on:...

"A translation may either follow the very words, or reproduce the life and spirit of the original; but no translation can do both. If you render word for word you loose the spirit; if you wish to give the spirit and manner you must depart from the exact words and frame your own phrases. I have chosen this latter course."

And having decided on this course when he set about translating the tales, he did his best he says "to render them into simple, homely English . . . as I conceive the old shanachies themselves would have told

them if they had used English instead of Gaelic."

Of course Joyce's English, like the English of O'Curry and O'Donovan, was never an Englishman's English and this, despite the fact that Joyce, as he tells us himself, did for a time endeavour to cultivate a genuine English style. "In early youth," he wrote, "I was a diligent student of English style; and in order to select or form a style for myself I read the best authors:—Addison, Steele, Swift, Johnson, Goldsmith, etc. . . . Johnson dazzled me for a time—especially in *Rasselas*; but I soon found out that he is not a desirable model to follow—so far as style is concerned—and I gave up imitating him. In the end indeed—though after much time and labour—which I think were not wasted—I ceased to imitate anyone and struck out for myself."²¹

The fact which Joyce could not alter was that Irish was his native language and that for him English would remain an acquired language.

James Joyce came up against this problem of the Irishman's ability to handle English. In *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* there is a discussion between the student Stephen Dedalus (James Joyce) and an English-born Jesuit that hinges on the usage of certain English words. And Stephen is made to meditate as follows:

"The language in which we are speaking is his before it is mine. How different are the words *home*, *Christ*, *ale*, *master*, on his lips and on mine! I cannot speak or write these words without unrest of spirit. His language, so familiar and so foreign, will always be for me an acquired speech. I have not made or accepted its words. My voice holds them at bay. My soul frets in the shadow of his language."

In introducing the tales in *Old Celtic Romances* P. W. Joyce refers to the fact that in many of the tales "the leading characters are often made to express themselves in verse, or some striking incident of the story is repeated in a poetical form". Joyce

repeated this practice in his translations, and his facility in turning a verse is seen in the following lines from *Connla of the Golden Hair*:—

*A pleasant land of winding vales, bright
streams and verdurous plains,
Where summer all the live-long year, in
changeless splendour reigns;
A peaceful land of calm delight, of
everlasting bloom;
Old age and death we never know, no
sickness, care, or gloom;
The land of youth,
Of love and truth,
From pain and sorrow free;
The land of rest,
In the golden west,
On the verge of the azure sea!*

—or in these verses describing one of the many wonders seen by *Maildun* and his crew during their Voyage:—

*In a wall-circled isle a big monster they
found.
With a hide like an elephant, leathery
and bare;
He threw up his heels with a wonderful
bound,
And ran round the isle with the speed
of a hare.*

*But a feat more astounding has yet to be
told:
He turned round and round in his
leathery skin;
His bones and his flesh and his sinews he
rolled—
He was resting outside while he twisted
within!*

*Then, changing his practice with marvellous
skill,
His carcase stood rigid and round went
his hide;
It whirled round his bones like the wheel
of a mill—
He was resting within while he twisted
outside!*

*Next, standing quite near on a green little
hill,
After galloping round in the very same
track,
While the skin on his belly stood perfectly
still,
Like a millstone he twisted the skin of
his back!*

*But Maildun and his men put to sea in
their boat,
For they saw his two eyes looking over
the wall;
And they knew by the way that he opened
his throat,
He intended to swallow them, curragh
and all!*

In a note on that final verse Joyce says: “The verse in the original is quite serious; but I could not resist the temptation to give it a humorous turn”.

When I was in second or third standard in the primary school one of the teachers used take us for the last quarter of an hour of the school day and read an instalment from *Old Celtic Romances* for us. The reading of a complete story from the book might be spread over the most of a week; and I remember how enthralled we were by the stories, and with what impatience we'd look forward to 3 o'clock when we'd sit in the back desk to hear the master read the next thrilling episode from the tale of the *Giolla Deacair* or from *the Fate of the Sons of Usna*.

We thus became acquainted with our own mythology, and the *dúchas* in us responded to it, in much the same way that an Irish countryman's feet will respond to the rhythm of reel or jig or hornpipe, for the race, it would seem, will always yearn for that which itself has produced and shaped. Ideally, of course, we should have heard the tales in Irish, but our knowledge of Irish at that time was not sufficient for our understanding and enjoying of them. Hearing them in English was the next best thing.

The work which most contributed to making Joyce's name widely known and which has kept it before the public ever since was his three-volume study of *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places*. It was to be the most permanent of his works, and he chose as his motto for it the words of the fourteenth-century topographical writer, Seán Mór Ó Dubhagáin: *Triallam timcheall na Fódhla*—Let us journey round Fódhla (Ireland). *Ní bhíonn saoi gan locht*, or, if you like, even Homer nods, and Joyce was not always right about the derivations of particular place-names. Furthermore, since his time new sources of information on place-names have come to light and, besides, other workers in this field have made special studies of the place-names of particular districts and are more authoritative for these districts than Joyce is. But having said all that one must then add that *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places* is still an important work of reference, and has not been superseded, for it alone treats of the place-names of the whole country. And here we might quote from one commentator's opinion of the work:

"His (Joyce's) treatment of this technical subject was most happy; the broad effects of legend, folklore and history cover the dry bones of etymology and led many into this and like fields of Irish work that might have been repelled by other writers . . . However much scientific workers may traverse many of his derivations, based rather on popular forms than on those of the records, they will long continue to use the bulk of his work and to admire the whole".²²

From the information he had gathered together in the three volumes of *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places* Joyce compiled a very useful little volume called *Irish Local Names Explained*, in which he gives the derivations of some thousands of our place-names.

English as we speak it in Ireland, published

in 1910, is perhaps the most interesting of Joyce's books. The Anglo-Irish dialectical words and phrases discussed by him in this book derived, he explains, from three main sources:

"First: the Irish language. Second: Old English and the dialect of Scotland. Third: independently of these two sources, dialectical expressions have gradually grown up among our English-speaking people, as dialects arise everywhere".

There are phrases that we use every day in English, unaware of the fact that they are pure Irishisms which would never be heard on the lips of an Englishman. Dozens of such phrases will be found in *English as we speak it in Ireland*. For example, in Irish we say of a man who died: *Fuair sé bás*; literally, "he found (or got) death". And this usage has resulted in such a common saying in Hiberno-English as "Come in out of the rain or you'll get your death". And very few Irishmen would find anything unusual about such a description as "a fool of a man". And yet this is a direct translation of a purely Irish usage, *amadán fir*.

English as we speak it in Ireland contains a vocabulary of hundreds of words, some of them Irish, some of them Old English or Scots, some nondescript, that coloured, and that in some cases still colour the English spoken in Ireland. A few examples will suffice.

"BAAN: a field covered with short grass:—'a baan field': 'a baan of cows': i.e. a grass farm with its proper number of cows. Irish *bán*".

"BY THE SAME TOKEN: this needs no explanation; it is a survival from Tudor English".

"CHOOK CHOOK (the *oo* sounded rather short); a call for hens—it is the Irish *tioc*".

"COLDY: a bad halfpenny; a spurious worthless article of jewellery.

"GREEDY-GUT: a glutton; a person who is selfish about stuffing himself, wishing to give nothing to anybody else".

"SHOONAUN: a deep circular basket, made

of twisted rushes or straw and lined with calico; it had a cover and was used for holding linen, clothes, &c. (Limerick and Cork). From Irish *sibhinn* (shiven), a rush, a bulrush: of which the diminutive *siubhnán* (shoonaun) is our word: signifying 'made of rushes'. Many a shoonaun I saw in my day; and I remember meeting a man who was a shoonaun maker by trade".

In various places in *English as we speak it in Ireland* Joyce illustrates the usage of some word, or the prevalence of some custom or tradition by reference to things he himself heard or saw in pre-Famine times in his own district. In this way we learn much about how the old life was lived in his part of the country. And as well, we learn a little about Joyce himself, for *English as we speak it in Ireland* is the only one of his books in which he tells us anything worthwhile about his youth in Glenosheen.

Fifteen years before the founding of the Gaelic League, that is to say in the year 1878, Joyce, who was a member of the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language, compiled *A Grammar of the Irish Language*, a useful and well-planned little book running to one hundred and thirty-six pages. It was, as Joyce observed, "low enough in price to be within reach of the many". A copy of the 1897 edition, which I have before me as I write, states, *Price to National Schools*, 6d.

Joyce's *The Wonders of Ireland*, published in 1911, contains an interesting assortment of folklore, essays and stories. One of the stories is titled *Garrett Mac Eniry*, and in an introductory note Joyce says: "I wrote this little story when I was very young and put it aside for some years. It was published in the year 1857 in a local newspaper, *The Tipperary Leader*—over the pen-name 'Carnferay': my first appearance in print. It represents faithfully the dialect of the Limerick peasantry of seventy years ago which I think is still much the same as it was then. Most or all of the scenes and

incidents are depicted from real life, as I witnessed them in my boyhood and youth".

Garrett Mac Eniry is the simple, pathetic story of an old couple who have seen all their children grow up and die, and who are left alone at the end of their days in a little village, where practically all the inhabitants are Palatines who are slowly learning Irish ways. When his wife dies the old man's world collapses about him. Everything he rests his eyes on is so charged with memories that he cannot bear to look on them anymore, and he leaves home and goes off to find a brother whom he has not seen since youth, but who now becomes for him the only anchor that will hold in the storm. For one so young as Joyce was when he wrote it, this story of *Garrett Mac Eniry* shows an unusual understanding of, and sympathy with, the ways of old people and a keen perception of the elements of which grief is compounded.

Among the other items in *The Wonders of Ireland* there is a very readable essay on *Spenser's Irish Rivers*, in which Joyce establishes the identity of the rivers and other physical features mentioned by Spenser in the *Faerie Queene*, the *Two Cantos of Mutabilitie* and *Colin Clouts come home again*. Kilcolman, where Spenser lived, lies on the opposite side of the Ballahouras from Glenosheen.

The wonders which Joyce tells about in *The Wonders of Ireland* were first described in such ancient works as the *Book of Ballymote* and *Giraldus Cambrensis' Topography of Ireland*, in which there is a long chapter headed, *Of the Wonders and Miracles of Ireland*. The "wonders" recounted in Joyce's book include: *A Ship and Crew in the Air*, *A Steeple of fire in the Air*, *An Island split in three by a Storm*, *The Man-wolves of Ossory*, *The loney Crane of Inishkea*, *The Bleeding Stone*.

It is generally agreed that the most important books Joyce left us were not any of the ones so far listed—valuable though many of these were—but his four collec-

tions of music and song: *Ancient Irish Music, Irish Music and Song, Irish Peasant Songs in the English Language, Old Irish Folk Music and Songs.*

There are over a hundred airs in *Ancient Irish Music* (published in 1872) as well as the words in Irish or English that go with many of the airs. One of the airs is named *Mór Chluana* (More of Cloyne) and in a note on the air Joyce says:

"I took down this fine tune in 1852 from Lewis O'Brien of Coolfree in the county Limerick; who stated that More was the guardian fairy of Cloyne . . .".

Mór Chluana is in fact the tune that was being mentioned as a likely National Anthem some twenty or more years ago by a considerable body of opinion which held that this tune had everything that *Amhrán na bhFiann*, or the *Soldiers' Song*, lacked in dignity and beauty. Irish words, composed by Osborn Ó hAimhirgín, had by then been wed to the tune of *Mór Chluana*, and both tune and song were now known as *An tAmhrán Dóchais* (The Song of Hope). But its associations with the fight for freedom won the day for *Amhrán na bhFiann*, and it still remains our National Anthem. The claims of *An tAmhrán Dóchais* however were not altogether dismissed, for it was selected as the *Taoiseach's Salute*, and is now played on the Taoiseach's arrival at formal occasions. Of this tune, which Joyce wrote down from his neighbour, Lewis O'Brien, in 1852, and which was one day to be mentioned as a likely National Anthem, Colm Ó Lochlainn had this to say in his booklet, *Anglo-Irish Song-Writers since Moore*:

"This is a very noble tune, full of dignity and one which might well serve as National Anthem or Processional March. It has a solemn rhythm comparable to Haydn's famous Austrian Emperor's Hymn."

Joyce's *Irish Music and Song* contains only songs in the Irish language. This collection was prepared by Joyce for the Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language.

It was after he had gone to reside in Dublin that Joyce began to think seriously about collecting and publishing as much as he could of the large body of Irish song and music that still survived. Always a lover of Irish music, he was surprised when he examined the published collections to discover that a great number of beautiful tunes that he himself knew were unpublished. He made this discovery in the year 1853 through his acquaintance with Doctor George Petrie, who was then engaged in editing his *Ancient Music of Ireland*. Mainly through Petrie's example and, indeed, partly at his suggestion, he set about writing down all the airs he could remember, a task that would continue to engage him to the very end of his long and industrious life.

During vacations he collected tunes and songs in all parts of the country, but principally in the South, noting down whatever he thought worthy, both music and words. He used to give his collections to Petrie, but kept copies of them. Petrie afterwards incorporated them in his own collection, with due acknowledgments to Joyce. Incidentally, it was on those occasions while he was travelling round the country collecting the old songs and music that Joyce first became interested in place-names. He wrote them down and checked on their meanings locally, thus laying the foundations of his three-volume work on *The Origin and History of Irish Names of Places*. He must have had his pockets full of scraps of paper covered with notes at that time. He tells us:

"In the year 1852 when I was drawing up from my memory for Doctor Petrie all the airs I could think of—and for that purpose commonly carried a bit of music paper in my waistcoat pocket—I woke up from sleep one night whistling this fine air ("The Orangeman") in a dream: an air which I had forgotten for years. Greatly delighted, I started up: a light, a pencil and a bit of paper and there was the first bar securely

captured: the bird was, as it were, caught and held by the tail".²³

Joyce's first collection of music was his *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs*, which was published in 1909 and which contains eight hundred and twenty-four airs that had never previously been published. A large number of these airs came from his native district, and to that district, for all that it had given him, he paid his tribute in the preface, saying:

"I spent all my early life in a part of the county Limerick where music, singing and dancing were favourite amusements. My home in Glenosheen, in the heart of the Ballahoura mountains, was a home of music and song: they were in the air of the valley; you heard them everywhere—sung, played, whistled; and they were mixed up with the people's pastimes, occupations and daily life. 'Though we had pipers, fiddlers, fifers, whistlers and singers of our own, wandering musicians were welcomed; and from every one some choice air or song that struck our fancy was sure to be learned and stored up to form part of an ever-growing stock of minstrelsy. As I loved the graceful music of the people from my childhood, their songs, dance tunes, *keens*, and lullabies remained in my memory, almost without any effort of my own: so that ultimately I became, as it were, the general and it may be said the sole, legatee of all this long-accumulating treasure of melody".

And he added, with justified pride in having grown up in such an environment:

"It will be seen then that my knowledge of Irish music, such as it is, did not come to me from the outside in after-life, or by a late study, as a foreign language is learned but grew up from within during childhood and boyhood, to form part of my mind, like my native language".

He remembered all the old neighbours from whom he had collected songs and tunes, and all through the book—and through his other collections as well—

there are the characteristic notes of acknowledgment:

"From the playing of Ned Goggin, the Glenosheen fiddler."

"From Norry Dwane of Glenosheen, 1846".

"From John Hickey of Ballyorgan".

"From Phil Gleeson of Coolfree near Ballyorgan, noted singer and whistler".

"From Davy Cleary, piper and dancing master, Kilfinane, 1842".

"From the singing of Mrs. Mary Mac Sweeney (his aunt) of Glenosheen".

"From Lewis O'Brien of Coolfree".

"From Bill Sheedy, pipe-player Fanningstown, Co. Limerick, 1844".

"From Davy Condon, thatcher, of Ballyorgan, 1844".

"From John Dolan of Glenosheen, 1845".

"From Mick Dinneen, Coolfree".

"From the singing of Joe Martin of Kilfinane, Co. Limerick, 1852. He sang an Irish song to it (the tune) of which this is the first verse:

*'Mo chreach a's mo dhiachairt gan ceo
draíochta ar na bóithribh
A's go siúlfaínn san oíche lem' chroí geal na
glóire . . .'*

Some of the notes are full of interest, capturing for us echoes of a world that has completely vanished, as this note in *Old Irish Folk Music and Song* on the tune, *A Mháire 's a Mhúirnín*, which Joyce directed to be played "with the variations and ornamentations of the Munster pipers and fiddlers":

"I heard O'Hannigan, a great Munster piper—blind—play these variations (in Mitchelstown, Co. Cork: 1844)—the runs all staccato—with amazing brilliancy and perfection of execution".

Or this note from the same collection (p. 38) on the tune, *Cois taoibh a' Chuain*: "When I learned this tune from the singing of my grandmother about 1850 she was then 90 years of age: she told me she learned it by hearing it played on the violin by her grandmother".

Joyce also learned many airs and songs from his father. Alice Kenny, an old woman from the parish of Glenroe, was another person who supplied him with songs. Among the songs he wrote down from her in the summer of 1853 was one called *An Ceo Draíochta* and he says, in *Ancient Irish Music* (p. 42):—

"I cannot forbear recalling the circumstances under which I obtained this air. I had often heard of old Alice Kenny who was at this time about 70 years of age, as a noted singer in her time; and I set out one day to visit her. When I arrived at her house her grandchildren told me she was up somewhere on the neighbouring hill; so I and my companion set out in search of her; and we found her on the very top, pulling heath to cook her supper. We sat down by a turf-rick and there for two hours she delighted me and delighted herself with her inexhaustible store of Irish airs and songs of all kinds—love songs, keens, lullabies, execution songs, etc. I took down several and left her, determined to renew my visit at the first opportunity. But no opportunity came; and I have never seen poor old Alice from that day to this".

One finds it difficult to resist the temptation to go on quoting from the notes one finds in the Joyce collections of music. But one more will have to suffice. This note (from *Old Irish Folk Music and Song*), a beautiful and evocative description, deals with the song, *An Clár Bog Déil*, a song also known as *Cois na Bríde* or *Caiseal Mumhan*. Joyce says:

"I once heard 'Cashel of Munster' sung under peculiarly pleasant and characteristic circumstances when I was a mere child. The people of the village had turned out on a sunny day in June to 'foot' the half-dry turf in the bog at the back of Seefin mountain which rises straight over Glenosheen: always a joyous occasion for us children. Dinner time came—about 1 o'clock: each family spread the white cloth on a chosen spot on the dry clean bog surface. There might have been half a dozen

groups in that part of the bog, all near each other and all sat down to dinner at the same time: glorious smoking hot floury savoury potatoes, salt herrings (hot like the potatoes) and good wholesome bláthach, i.e. skimmed thick milk slightly and pleasantly sour—a dinner fit for a hungry king.

After dinner there was always a short interval for rest and diversion—generally rough joyous romping. On this occasion the people, with one accord, asked Peggy Moynahan to sing them a song. Peggy was a splendid girl, noted for her singing: and down she sat willingly on a turf bank. In a moment the people clustered round, all play and noise and conversation ceased; and she gave us the *Clár Bog Déil* in Irish with intense passion, while the people—old and young, including myself and my little brother, Robert—sat and listened, mute and spellbound".

And looking back over the vanished years, he added:

"I have good reason to fear that the taste for intellectual and refined amusements—singing, music, dancing, story-telling, small informal literary clubs and meetings, etc.—once so prevalent among the people of my native district, which often expressed itself in scenes such as I describe here, is all gone; and we shall never witness the like again. Is mór an trua é. More's the pity!"

Joyce retired from his post as Principal of Marlborough Street Training College in 1893, at the age of sixty-six, and it was from that time onward that he wrote most of his books. The zeal and devotion he brought to his chosen task of preserving knowledge of the past for future generations was remarkable. As a man Joyce remained very much a countryman. "He was a retiring unpretentious man . . . was happiest at his studies and never sought the limelight".²⁴ He interested himself and distinguished himself in many fields, but it was to the collection of the old songs and music of Ireland he really gave his heart. In his youth he had taken intense delight in the musicians and singers of his native



The village of Glenosheen with Seefin in the background.

Glenosheen and, to misquote Wordsworth ever so slightly—

*The music in his heart he bore
Long after it was heard no more.*

He acted as music adjudicator at the very first *Oireachtas* organised by the Gaelic League, and was on the panel of adjudicators for the Dublin *Feis Cheoil*. He was a member of a number of learned societies and of more popular societies devoted to Irish culture. For many years he was an active member of the Royal Irish Academy and of the Royal Society of Antiquaries, being elected president of the latter society in 1906. As well, he was one of the commissioners concerned in the publication of the Brehon Laws.

In 1856 he married Caroline, daughter of Lieutenant John Waters, of Baltinglass, by whom he had three sons and two daughters. His eldest son, Weston St. John Joyce, was the author of a popular book called *Dublin and its Neighbourhood*.

Patrick Weston Joyce died at his home, Barnalee, Rathmines, on 7 January, 1914, at the age of eighty-seven. He had been ill for five weeks but almost to the very end he had continued to work on a further

collection of Irish music which he had hoped to see published. Few men can have loved the old songs, the old music, the old traditions of Ireland better than he. He was buried in Glasnevin on 9 January, 1914.

The tributes paid to him were many. In the course of an Obituary in the *Irish Independent* of 10 January, 1914, Eoghan Ó Neachtain wrote:

"Tá an Dr. P. Seoighe tar éis bháis, go ndéana Dia trócaire ar a anam! Is fada an saol a fuair sé . . . agus is fóinteach an chaoi ar chaith sé a lá, is fóinteach an chaoi, deirim, ar chaith sé é . . . Fear cliste a bhí ann ó thús agus fear ioldánach ó thús go deireadh . . . Scríobh sé . . . leabhar do pháistí ag insint stair na hÉireann. Tá an leabhar sin le fáil fós agus ceann níos deise ná é níl ann i leith pictiúir ag cur síos ar dheise agus ar mhaise dána in Éirinn. Scríobh sé gráiméar Gaeilge roimh aimsir Chonradh na Gaeilge agus ba mhór an leas do lucht foghlama na teanga an leabhar sin . . . Solas na bhFlaitheas go dtuga Dia don údar a chaith a dhúthracht ar son na hÉireann".

A writer in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Antiquaries* (Vol. 45 (1915) 69-71) paying tribute to him, spoke of Joyce having been born

"... in sight of the Ballahoura Mountains and the Galtees and, as so often, the impression of the surroundings of his boyhood left its mark on all his after life. In one of his books, English as we speak it in Ireland, he gives us clues to these influences, recollections of the passionate piety of the peasantry in the little thatched, earth-floored chapel, of the rough but scholarly hedge schoolmasters, of the dancers for whom (like another Goldsmith) he played on the fife, and of the traditions of the glens and fields . . ."

In the course of his lifetime Joyce amassed a great amount of knowledge about his native country, knowledge, very much of which might have otherwise been lost. And tireless as he was in the amassing of this knowledge he was equally tireless in imparting it to others. In all, he wrote thirty books, twenty-four of them about Ireland; and in the Royal Irish Academy and the National Library there are manuscript collections of music that he never lived to publish.

P. W. Joyce followed in the footsteps of Bunting and Petrie, of O'Donovan and O'Curry, reaching, however, a larger public than any of these four had reached, for the fields he laboured in were more numerous and, as well as that, he principally wrote not for scholars but for the ordinary people of Ireland, people such as he had known in that lovely and never-forgotten countryside round about Glenosheen.

ROBERT DWYER JOYCE

Robert Dwyer Joyce, P. W's brother, was born in Glenosheen in 1830 and, like his brother, was educated in local hedge-schools. At school he was soon to prove himself of more than average intelligence, displaying in particular an aptitude for languages. While still in his teens he entered the service of the Commissioners of National Education and trained as a teacher. For several further years he continued to

study under the direction of his brother, P. W., whom he was eventually to replace as Principal of the Clonmel Model School, when P. W. was chosen by the Commissioners to do a special course of study in connection with the reorganisation of the National School system.

In 1857 he resigned his post as teacher and went to Queen's College, Cork, where he studied medicine, taking his M.D. in 1865. During his time at Queen's College he won a number of scholarships and prizes, but since these sources were not adequate to keep him and pay for his studies he supplemented them through part-time teaching and through his writings. He contributed poems, articles and stories to such papers as *Nation*, *Harp* (Cork), *Dublin Saturday Magazine*, *The Celt*, *Irishman*, *Irish People* (this was the organ of Fenianism) and *The Universal News*, this latter a Catholic paper published in London, the editor at that time being John Francis O'Donnell, a gifted young Limerick poet. Joyce's contributions to these papers usually appeared above the pen-name "Feardana," or, sometimes, "Merulan."

His first collection of poems appeared in 1861, under the title *Ballads, Romances and Songs*. This is the collection which in a later edition, and with additions, was to appear under the title, *Ballads of Irish Chivalry*.

Joyce's first love was literature, and even after he had taken his M.D. we find him accepting the post of Professor of English Literature in the Preparatory Department of the Catholic University in Dublin. Soon afterwards he was elected member of the Royal Irish Academy, his sponsors being the Earl of Dunraven and Professor Kells Ingram, the latter author of the famous song, *Who fears to speak of '98*.

Joyce, an ardent believer in Irish freedom, had been attracted to the Fenian movement, and his contributions to the nationalist journals of the time bear testimony to the

strength of the views he held as to Ireland's right to be free. Marcus Bourke states of him that he "was always on the fringe of the extreme nationalist movement, though not apparently a member of the I.R.B."²⁵ When the Fenian Rising failed to come off in 1865 he was extremely disappointed; and although a bright future seemed in store in his own land for the young medico and *litterateur* he left Ireland and sailed for the United States in 1866, going, we are told, because "British rule in Ireland did not suit his ideas of freedom."²⁶

He settled in Boston, where his career both as a doctor and a literary man was crowned with success. Among those who were to become his ardent admirers and friends were such Boston literary figures as ex-Governor Long, John C. Abbott, Wendell Phillips and Doctor Oliver Wendell Holmes.²⁷ In 1868 and 1871, respectively, Joyce published in Boston two small volumes of Irish tales in prose, *Legends of the Wars in Ireland* and *Irish Fireside Tales*; and several others of his prose stories—all on Irish themes—were contributed to various magazines. He had already written a novel, *The Squire of Castle town*, which was published in *The Irishman*.

A new edition of *Ballads, Romances and Songs*, but this time under the title *Ballads of Irish Chivalry*, was published by Patrick Donahue of Boston in 1872, but very soon after it had come from the press, it was destroyed in the great Boston fire of 1872. A third edition, prepared by P. W. Joyce, appeared in 1908.

As to the poems that make up *Ballads of Irish Chivalry*, I might here quote the opinion of Doctor George Sigerson (author of *Bards of the Gael and Gall*), who wrote the short unsigned preface for the 1861 edition.

"They were not", wrote Sigerson, "of that literary school which seemed as perfect and as trite as if they were machine-made. On the contrary they had a certain wild

flower freshness about them which recalled the rivers, glens and woody mountains, the romance of love in sylvan glades, revels of moonlight fairies, feats of daring and unknown vivid legends of the land we love. The author evidently had a thorough knowledge of the old airs sung throughout the country, for a large number of his verses were written to those airs and were songs in reality as well as in name. The legendary poems, like the others, came direct from living sources, not from books, and led to a new fair land of enchantment, achievement and high endeavour."²⁸

The poems in *Ballads of Irish Chivalry* show not only Joyce's deep knowledge of Irish history in general but also his remarkable knowledge of the local history and legends of the South. In particular he was steeped in the lore of his own Ballahoura country. Only a man who truly loved the traditions of the people would have amassed such a great store of local knowledge as he possessed. And his familiarity with every hill and glen and stream in his native district could only have come from his having explored them all, again and again. We know that ever since his boyhood, one of his great delights lay in "Walking long distances from early morning 'till night with his favourite companions, sketching old castles and churches, or in the shooting and fishing parties . . ."²⁹

Small wonder then if his native district figures so often in his songs. He introduces a legend of Ardpatrik in the poem, *The Well of the Omen*. First he paints a picture of olden times when

At morn up green Ard-Patrick the Sunday
bell rang clear,
And downward came the peasants with
looks of merry cheer,
With many a youth and maiden by
pathways green and fair,
To hear the Mass devoutly and say the
Sunday prayer;

*And the meadows shone around them while
 the skylarks gay were singing,
 And the stream sang songs amid the flowers
 and the Sunday bell was ringing.
 And then he mentions the legend of the
 holy well that is situated near the site of the
 old Patrician foundation:—*

*There is a well sunk deeply by old Ard-
 Patrick's wall;
 Within it gaze the peasants to see what
 may befall:
 Who see their shadows down below, they
 will have merry cheer;
 Who see not any shadows shall die within
 the year.
 There staid the youths and maidens where
 the soft green grass was springing,
 While the stream sang songs amid the
 flowers and the Sunday bell was ringing.*

Doctor Sigerson, in the quotation already given, spoke of a large number of Joyce's compositions being songs in reality as well as in name. Doctor Sigerson had in mind such compositions as *Along with my Love I'll go*, *Roving Brian O'Connell*, *The Drynan Dhun*, *Johnnie Dunlea*, *Song of Galloping O'Hogan*, *Fair Maidens' Beauty will soon fade away* and *The Old Love and the New Love*—

*I sat within the valley green,
 I sat me with my true love,
 My sad heart strove the two between,
 The old love and the new love:—
 The old for her, the new that made
 Me think on Ireland dearly;
 While soft the wind blew down the glade
 And shook the golden barley.*

*'Twas hard the mournful words to frame,
 To break the ties that bound us—
 'Twas harder still to bear the shame
 Of foreign chains around us;
 And so I said, "The mountain glen
 I'll seek next morning early,
 And join the brave United Men":
 While soft winds shook the barley.*

*While sad I kissed away her tears,
 My arms around her flinging,
 The foeman's shot burst on our ears,
 From out the wild wood ringing.
 The bullet pierced my true love's side,
 In life's young spring so early,
 And there upon my breast she died,
 While soft winds shook the barley.*

*I bore her to the wild wood screen;
 And many a summer blossom
 I placed, with branches soft and green,
 Above her gore-stained bosom:
 I wept and kissed her pale pale cheek,
 Then rushed o'er vale and far lea,
 My vengeance on the foe to wreak,
 While soft winds shook the barley.*

*And blood for blood, without remorse,
 I've tak'n at Oulart Hollow,
 While mourners placed my true love's corse
 Where I full soon will follow;
 Around her grave I wander drear,
 Noon, night and morning early,
 With breaking heart whene'er I hear
 The wind that shakes the barley.*

Joyce's fine dramatic piece, *The Blacksmith of Limerick*, has long been a favourite recitation. It tells the story of the blacksmith who, when the Williamites attempted to storm Limerick city in August, 1690, left Sarsfield's horse unshod, for there was more urgent work to do—

*The blacksmith raised his hammer and
 rushed into the street,
 His 'prentice boys behind him, the ruthless
 foe to meet:
 High on the breach of Limerick with
 dauntless hearts they stood,
 Where bombshells burst and shot fell thick
 and redly ran the blood.*

There is a great variety of themes in *Ballads of Irish Chivalry*. Eoghan Rua Ó Néill, Sarsfield, O'Sullivan Beare, Gearóid Iarla, Finneen O'Driscoll, Spenser,

In Boston, a city then enjoying a reputation for literary activity, Doctor Oliver

*The flowers that once were fair to me,
The meadows and the blooming tree
Dark as funeral garments grow;
And I am suffering and I know.*³¹

Joyce became very closely associated with the Fenian movement in the United States. When leaving Ireland for America he had taken with him a sword which had belonged to one of his mother's family. This particular O'Dwyer had gone to France with the Wild Geese after the signing of the Treaty of Limerick in 1691. He joined the French army and fought in the War of the Spanish Succession, and was killed in 1707 at the battle of Almansa, where the English were defeated by the Duke of Berwick. O'Dwyer's sword was brought back to Ireland, presumably by a comrade, and was given to his family, and passed eventually to Elizabeth O'Dwyer, mother of P. W. and Robert Dwyer Joyce. The latter had inscribed on it the words, *Buille ar son Éireann*—a blow for Ireland. And that is what Robert Dwyer Joyce hoped himself to strike some day—a blow for Ireland.

He was far from Ireland however when the Fenians struck their blow for Ireland in March, 1867. The last fight of the Fenian Rising took place on 31 March, 1867, at Kilclooney Wood, a few short miles south of Joyce's native Glenosheen. That was the fight in which the chivalrous Fenian leader, Peter O'Neill Crowley, lost his life. When news of Kilclooney reached Joyce he wrote a long poem in memory of Crowley, and of the fight that he and his comrades had made. The patriotic spirit of the author is well revealed in this stirring poem:—

*God bless you, Peter Crowley,
For the holy work you wrought;
God rest your soul in heaven's bright bowers
For the lesson you have taught—
Fair Freedom 'till the end of time
Shall fondly point to it;
That lesson in your heart's best blood*

*For trampled nations writ—
That in their struggles to be free
And gain their rights again,
One true man, dead for liberty,
Is worth ten living men!*

*The beacon fires enkindled
By Emmet and by Tone,
Bright have they glowed on Freedom's road
To lead our footsteps on—
O Martyr! on that dangerous way
A flame gleams now from thine
As high and clear but still more near
To Freedom's holy shrine,
Where graved above the gate we see
By Freedom's trenchant pen,
"One true man, dead for liberty,
Is worth ten living men."*

*'Twas down in wild Kilclooney,
At the dawning of the day,
The redcoats circled round the wood,
To catch their gallant prey.
Young Kelly and the stout Mac Clure
And Crowley, brave and bold—
He slept as sleeps the lion king
In his rocky mountain hold—
Perchance he dreamt that vision free
Within his woody den—
One true man, dead for liberty,
Is worth ten living men.*

*Hark! 'Twas the foeman's summons
That on their slumbers broke,
And answering quick that hostile call
The outlaws' rifles spoke.
The captured Kelly and Mac Clure
Saw fearless Crowley stand,
With a bullet wound on his forehead fair,
And a broken trigger hand.
And they heard him shout full lustily
Adown the wooded glen,
"One true man, dead for liberty,
Is worth ten living men!"*

*A brave dash at the foeman,
And through their frightened ranks,
And down the shaggy mountain side*

To Ounageeragh's banks—
 With pistol in his good left hand,
 And the red blood on his right;
 There turned he with a dauntless heart
 To fight his last brave fight.
 And well he knew, that soldier free,
 That Fenian hero then,
 One true man, dead for liberty,
 Is worth ten living men.

A volley from the redcoats,
 From him one pistol ball,
 That brought a foeman to the earth,
 And then 'twas silent all.
 He tottered for a moment's space,
 Then fell into the tide
 That round the hero foamed and whirled
 With his heart's blood crimsoned wide
 "God's mercy on my soul!" cried he,
 And gasped he forth again,
 "One true man, dead for liberty,
 Is worth ten living men!"

To the town upon the Funcheon³²
 The hero's corse they bore,
 And never such a sight was seen
 By Funcheon's winding shore.
 The women gathered all around
 To join his sister's wail.
 And the men with stern eyes sadly bent
 On the Martyr's corse so pale.
 They felt that lesson of the free,
 Their proud hearts warming then,
 One true man, dead for liberty,
 Is worth ten living men!

From the town upon the Funcheon
 On stout shoulders went his bier,
 With laurels decked and the fairest flowers
 Of the springtime of the year;
 Unto the ancient churchyard,
 Where lay his sires full low,
 The mighty concourse wound along
 With mournful pace and slow—
 His country's tyrants shook to see
 The lesson taught them then,
 One true man, dead for liberty,
 Is worth ten living men.

In the red grave lies our Martyr
 With his glorious laurel crown,
 In the pride of youth and manliness
 And unforgot renown—
 And could you see the looks I saw
 Around his clay-cold bed,
 With swelling breast you'd proudly say,
 "Old Ireland is not dead!"
 With clenched hands you'd cry with me
 In voice of thunder then—
 "One true man, dead for liberty,
 Is worth ten living men!"

We'll build him up a monument
 With Emmet, Sheares and Tone,
 And with all our country's martyrs,
 When Ireland is our own.
 We'll build it on some old green hill,
 Where the Irish winds shall blow
 Their histories round admiring earth
 To the nations in their woe;
 And with our swords the legend free
 We'll carve upon it then—
 "One true man, dead for liberty,
 Is worth ten living men!"

Joyce was a close and trusted friend of such Fenian leaders as O'Donovan Rossa, John Devoy and James J. O'Kelly, and his name figures fairly frequently in the correspondence edited by Desmond Ryan and William O'Brien in *Devoy's Post Bag*.³³

When John Boyle O'Reilly reached America after his escape from the convict colony in Australia, Joyce was one of the small group who succeeded in getting him a post on the influential paper, *The Boston Pilot*.³⁴ And later he and O'Reilly were on the committee of Boston Fenians who welcomed Devoy and other released Fenians on their arrival in that city in 1871. O'Reilly, with characteristic modesty, described the committee as being composed of "the eight first Irishmen in Boston and myself."

In 1871 Joyce and O'Reilly were among the Fenians who supported Devoy when the latter intimated his willingness to back

the "New Departure", the name given to the alliance forged between the American Clan na Gael (the ungrammatical name of this militant organisation arose through somebody, not too familiar with Irish, writing the name intended, *Clanna Gael*, as Clan na Gael) on the one hand and Parnell, Davitt and the Land Leaguers on the other. A year later Joyce was a member of the committee appointed to ensure the success of Parnell's American visit.³⁵

But although he gave his blessing to the "New Departure" Joyce believed that Irish freedom would not be won without a fight, and he continued to busy himself planning new methods of casting guns and improving the Fenian gunpowder factories, with a view to militant action in Ireland.³⁶

He was not without some military training himself, for he held the rank of colonel in the army of the United States, and he numbered among his acquaintances many of the officers of the Maryland and Massachussets' regiments. We are told that the walls of several rooms of his residence were covered with maps of battlefields in Europe and the United States.³⁷ And he knew, and he was glad of it, that

*"The old hope still lingered in Erin
Of a fight for her mountains and plains".*

Boston, when Doctor Joyce settled there, was fast becoming, socially and politically, a city of fashion, wealth and influence. With the close of the Civil War many of the most prominent men in New England took up residence there. It quickly became, we are told, "the hub of the universe"; its population rising from 250,256 in 1870 to 448,477 in 1890. By the latter year the Irish population in the city was 30,000. The young Irish physician found conditions favourable for a successful career.³⁸

Doctor Joyce was not only admitted to, but was courted by, the best society. But it was the working classes of the Irish population that his heart really went out. He

understood them intimately, and was friend as well as physician to them; and they, in their turn revered him. He allowed no barrier of professional formality to intrude itself into his relationship with them; he spoke to them as man to man, and his sincerity and his cheerful words and manner were often the only remedy required to cure the pangs and aches of some "poor exile of Erin."

It often happened that when he called to see some poor or needy patient he discovered that what really was needed was not medicine so much as food; and in such cases he invariably went to the nearest store and paid for food to be sent to the patient.³⁹

The man who feels much suffers much. And it was so in a marked degree with Robert Dwyer Joyce. His great sympathy with those who sorrowed or were ill; and his deep involvement in the cause of Irish freedom would ultimately tax his strength beyond the breaking point. He found his only real relaxation in his writing. Having already written two long epic poems on Irish mythological themes he now planned a third such poem, *The Courtship of Etain*, but this was never completed. After seventeen strenuous years in Boston his health began to fail and he decided to return to Ireland.

Father Crowley (author of *Irish Poets and Novelists*) and a mutual friend visited him in his rooms in Chambers Street, Boston, about a month before his departure for Ireland. Though but a shadow of his former self, Father Crowley tells us that he yet seemed vigorous and talked eloquently all the time. After some remarks about his imminent return to Ireland he changed the conversation to Irish history and literature. His ruling passion was still strong. Father Crowley's friend remarked:

"Come what may, Doctor, you have left your impress on the literature of your native land and established a lasting fame."

"Fame, I suppose," remarked Father

Crowley, "affords very poor consolation to a man when about to close his eyes to earthly things."

"On that point," said Doctor Joyce, "I do not agree with you. I think it affords one great consolation. It is a great deal to leave behind a name that is likely to be cherished in the hearts of a grateful people. I do not however," he continued, "draw all my consolation from that source. The priest was with me yesterday and I am prepared for any kind of journey now. If the worst comes I am not without hope of a happy resurrection."⁴⁰

Robert Dwyer Joyce left Boston in September, 1883. A Boston journal, wishing him *bon voyage*, said:

"Dr. Joyce returns to the land of his birth after an unbroken absence of twenty years, during which time he has achieved distinction here in medicine as well as in literature. He at once attracted attention by his professional ability and fidelity and obtained a large practice. His kindly nature led him to give a goodly number of young medical students the benefit of his advice and encouragement and he presided over classes of physicians who derived great benefit from his practical instruction. He was also a lecturer in Harvard Medical School."⁴¹

And before long an Irish journal had this to say of him, in the course of an obituary:—

"He was greatly beloved in Boston which he left with the good wishes of rich and poor alike; and on the day of his departure a large party of the chief citizens escorted him on board the Cunard steamship *Marathon* to give him a loving good-bye. He will long be remembered by the poor Irish population of Boston, for he was as ready with his dollars to relieve their necessities as he was with his medical skill to alleviate their ailments!"⁴²

Robert Dwyer Joyce died in the home of his brother P. W. Joyce, in Dublin, on 24 October, 1883. He had received the Last Sacraments from an old friend of his, Father C. P. Meehan, author of *The Fate and Fortunes of the Earls of Tyrone and Tyrconnell*. He was buried in Glasnevin.

In the course of a lecture on Joyce and his poetry, delivered on 10 January, 1916, Doctor George Sigerson, President of the National Literary Society—the same who had written the preface for Joyce's first collection of poems fifty-five years earlier—recalling that Joyce was a Munster man, said:—

"Munster had, indeed, been a wonderland of chivalry because of its great Norman-Irish feudatories, whose tragic

SOURCES

1, *Wonders of Ireland*. P. W. Joyce. p. 205; 2, *Ibid* p. 206; 3, *Ibid* p. 206; 4, *English as we speak it in Ireland*. pp. 71, 161; 5, *Ibid* pp. 152, 153; 6, *Ibid* pp. 156, 157; 7, *Ibid* p. 158; 8, *Ibid* pp. 158, 159; 9, *Ibid* pp. 155, 156; 10, *Ibid* p. 151; 11, *Ibid* p. 152; 12, *Ibid* p. 146; 13, *Ibid* pp. 147, 148; 14, *The Diocese of Limerick from 1691 to Present Time*. Begley. p. 628; 15, *English as we speak it in Ireland* pp. 184, 185; 16, *Ibid* p. 276; 17, *Ancient Irish Music*. P. W. Joyce p. 32; 18, *English as we speak it in Ireland* p. 342; 19, Article—"Yesterday"—by D. F. Moore in *Evening Press*, 16,9,1959; 20, Article—"The Joyce Brothers from Limerick"—by Cathal O'Shannon, *Evening Press*, 19,1,1962; 21, *Wonders of Ireland* p. 115; 22, Obituary in *Journal of Royal Society of Antiquaries of Ireland*, 45 (1915) 69-71; 23, *Old Irish Folk Music and Songs*. P. W. Joyce. p. 4; 24, Article—"Yesterday"—by D. F. Moore in *Evening Press*, 17,9,1959; 25, John O'Leary. Marcus Bourke. p. 66; 26, Article by Rev. D. O. Crowley in *Irish Poets and Novelists*. Published San Francisco, 1893; 27, *Ibid*; 28, *Irish Book Lover*. Feb.-March 1916, p. 131; 29, Article on R. D. Joyce by W. B. Doyle in *Limerick Leader*, 5,8,1950; 30, *Ibid*; 31, Father Crowley's article in *Irish Poets and Novelists*. See 26 above.; 32, The town on the Funcheon is Mitchelstown; 33, Cathal O'Shannon's article on Joyce brothers in *Evening Press*. See 20 above; 34, *Ibid*; 35, *Ibid*; 36, Feature "Window on the Past" *Irish Press*, 24,10,1962; 37, W. B. Doyle's article in *Limerick Leader*. See 29 above; 38, *Ibid*; 39, *Ibid*; 40, Father Crowley's article in *Irish Poets and Novelists*. See 26 above; 41, W. B. Doyle's article in *Limerick Leader*. See 29 above; 42, *Irish Times* report of funeral of R. D. Joyce 27,10,1883; 43, *Irish Book Lover*. Feb.-March 1916. p. 131.

Other sources are acknowledged in body of the article.

The extract from the 1821 census return is from a manuscript copy of certain entries for the Kilfinane-Ardpatrick district made by the late Pádraig Ó Ruairc, formerly of Ardpatrick and Dublin, before the destruction of the originals in the Four Courts in 1922.

fortunes were like red rubies in history, as their ruined castles stand out like wrecks on earth. But none could understand the country; none could feel with that vivid intensity which its picturesque life demanded, save one who had a poet's imagination, a complete knowledge of its written records and a thorough, minute and familiar friendship with unwritten popular life, its sentiments and traditions. Such a man was he. There was but one other quality required—that he should have a high love of honour, the true spirit of chivalry. That, too, he possessed. Joyce was a knight of the old times when knighthood

was in flower. He was an open-air poet; traces of his knowledge and love of nature are in almost every poem. Trees, bushes, berries, wild plants of all kinds, are familiar to him, as are the ways of sea gulls and ravens, wild deer and wolves . . . in 1883 he came 'to die at home at last.' It might be said that his spirit outwore the scabbard, but what an honour for the scabbard to have sheathed and preserved unsullied so pure, so bright and so chivalrous a spirit."⁴⁸

The memory of the Joyce brothers of Glenosheen deserves to be kept alive. Each, in his own way, did good work for Ireland at a time when such work was sorely needed.

GABHAIM BUÍOCHAS LEO

I would like to express my very special thanks to Doctor Robert Dwyer-Joyce, of Histon, Nr. Cambridge, England, for supplying me with a copy of Michael Joyce's pedigree of the Joyce family, as well as other notes relative to the family.

And I would like to thank Mr. Walter MacGrath, Cork, for letting me have the words of R. D. Joyce's poem on O'Neill Crowley; also Miss Patricia MacMahon, Limerick, and Mr. Máirtín MacCába, Co. Librarian, Monaghan, for their valuable assistance.



“DOWN WINE RICHED MEADOWS”

By

JAMES W. KELLY

THE STARS

*I leant backwards
on the frosty air
and there above us all the time
the great white stars
watched down impassively
like a tumble of diamonds
on the velvet throat
of a gracious lady in Paris,
and then above us in the night
four stars wheeled
like a procession of knights
all still and silent
in the jousting field of God.
And it was all above us
just outside the settlement
where people live in crowds
huddling under yellow lights
if we but only lift our heads.*

THINGS

things have come to baffle me
things like water
limpid water in the Corrib
oozing over lime-soft rocks
and innocent of identity;
or a company of penny candles
puffing in a breath of wind
on a stormy night in March
white columns of flame
like alabaster
or Trappist monks in cowls
standing in the air
and stingy like a wasp;
or a bundly little blue tit
landing on the wire
in line with a television screen
singing through the funeral of Luther King
all innocent of personhood.

ASTRONAUT

Lyndon Johnson added dutifully to the rest;
"He died in the service of science"—
He did indeed
Kamarov died for a bum calculation,
trying to come in from space;
he knew the equation given him was wrong
but just the same obeyed;
he was saying to someone on his wireless
"You're mistaken,
You're leading me wrong"
when he died.

A NEW BREED

a GAA match between ancient counties
indeed a non-match in a winter league
but which would tell something about a former match
and about manhood and pristine honour.
The town was filled with men, young men,
walking quietly and beautifully clean
greeting one another easily as friends

or colleagues in a science-room,
and when the game was on
and an ugly man through crooked teeth
poured out the ancient bile
and the game got dirty from within
the young men did not join in rancour
but left the place quite silently
without protest or surprise
and left us there unvisited and alone.

SECRET INTERVIEW WITH IAGO

"Sure, I can sleep at night
I can live without grace
I am respected by a few.
Those who know me fear me,
most just think of me as modern—
although there is no such beast.

I watch unblinkingly as from a tower
I watch to see a new land grow in holy Ireland
I work with all my waking soul
and hope
because time and sex are on my side.

I suffocate
in this land of priests and brothers
but I can still smile if needs must be
and inquire after Father John.
I will even go to Mass—but not in Dublin,
there are limits.

We must have Ireland cracked apart and—made again
there's good talent here you know—
we must have Saturday night let loose
red booze and hunting down the endless night
and Ireland will be ours
when country girls stop worrying
about what they think at home.

There are those who think me evil
but there is no evil
except being unawakened:
there is no sin
except the stench of sin
sprayed down on us by others;

there is no god
above that gray black cloud you see up there,
at least I never saw any, did you, mate;
I only believe in roulette,
of walking into a room of people
and letting the wheel go spin,
without abandon there is no life;
let Ireland be a party
and may we not wake up.

I hate,
period!
I hate and feel small with hating
I can smell hate in others
I seek for it
I look for it, you know.
It's like little drops
that will freeze and crack the structure
and any drop will do:
IRA, orange, stars and ploughs,
anything that will stir quiet men
to think they are right to be wrong.

Yes, dam you,
there is one nightmare
that comes unbidden
sometimes I see my work just failing;
I see the cow assimilate the poison
and stagger up on all four feet
and stand there swaying
her veins are very strong,
and then I feel I've sold my Christian soul for nothing
and I stand out there in the dark like Satan
outside the circle of kneeling men—
that's the worst moment of all."

A PASSING THOUGHT

It is two o'clock this morning
even the late lights are out
and the town sleeps quiet as a child
and under the lantern stars
like a great black whale
the world breasts forward
through the sleeping night
and we sleep on
enjoying God's protection.

BESSARABIA

I

I first heard of Bessarabia
as of places like Tobruk, Vichy and the Kiel Canal
during Hitler's war back in the last generation
when my father was young and handsome.
The war had got round to Rumania and Bessarabia
like a flow of water obeying its momentum
running on towards Russia.
They were days of high adventure on the "Eastern Front"
when the boy-scouts, Von Bock, Von Leeb, Von Runstedt
lined up before the steppes of Russia
before they went across to carve the stranded whale.
And when the whistle blew, they went like greyhounds
except Runstedt who got caught in this place, Bessarabia.
It was high summer in June of '41
a time for singing the songs of Transylvania
when a cardinal butterfly reeled in flight
and floated down the wine rich meadows;
when girls in stiff laced bodices
danced in long white stockings
through a patchwork quilt of days.
But no one then remembered songs or festivals
as German tanks moved gently through the rye
and war absolved us from the burden of sanity
as everyone made ready to kill;
to kill bolshevik hordes and German pigdogs.
Eventually the Germans got across the river
and the fox-hunt went tally-ho
leaving Bessarabia a chocolate box
on a chocolate hill.

2

It must be years afterwards,
years of deflowering and wintering,
years of barbarities on the lonely steppes,
when one evening in gathering dusk they returned
flitting like shades across the mist.
This time there was no kissing from the lorries.
There was nothing growing on the earth,
even the clean grass was dirty,
potato-pits were mouldy men;
there was no summer that year;
this time we did not hear of "Barbarossa"
but of straightening lines and heavy losses

and when the earthmen had gone on by
other musk-men took their place
and there was silence in the land,
the silence of women who pay the price of war
and in the muffled drum-call
before darkness closed the day
people and places quietly submitted to their shame
stripping off quite simply the empty cartons of their lives
leaving exposed white sluggish animals without eyes or memory,
limpets, who would not feel the pain.
Because this was going to last a thousand years.

3

And so, little children,
at that time in the forest
the trees were all cut down
and the winter came and stayed
in cold and bitter darkness
and old and useless days
and stale and stupid snow.
But even snow will melt
and time will pass
and the bosom of the earth is warm
and down below the seed will come to burst and blow
and stretch and peer above the surface of the ground
and life will suddenly creep round in little colours.

4

In the People's Republic
there was a new generation up
begotten by dull faces
and bereft of memory.
They grew up lean and silent
they did not lust to talk at all
and what they said and what they did
was quite indifferent—
you only remember them with machine tools.
They are grown up now
with flats and flower-pots,
they have already begotten the new crowd;
they have schnapps and circuses—
they do not talk about their fathers.
And yet, you fools,
it was from these flats
in the People's Republic
that the name appeared again,

a name of childhood nursery rhyme
heard incredibly from a factory floor,
a voice was chanting young and innocent
a voice that was unsurprised and autochthonic
"Bessarabia", it said, "belongs to us".

5

You out there
when you see the faceless ones
do not presume
that you alone have known gentility.

6

there is a man in Rumania,
a proletariat man,
he works in a factory,
he comes to the People's Park
on rest-days with his son;
he is a danger to peace,
he will not let it happen
because in the evening time
when the heavy amber light
 is slanting through the square
he remembers things,
he remembers things of Bessarabia:
the sea of September maize,
the tree his father planted,
the day his father had died,
and was buried in the rich black clay
and postponed the harvest dance that year.
That little boy too in the park—
he goes to school,
he is due for promotion,
in the League for Peace,
yet he too will have to die
because he has seen his father's eyes unhooded
 and naked love and yearning
 flash from out those worker's clothes;
he will remember too
 because the greatest wars
 reduce to village memories
 of simple people
 of simple wrongs.

YEVTUSHENKO AT FATIMA

so this is what the Pope is like
with appealing eyes
and the visionary beside him
so ordinary looking
 like a peasant woman
 from Little Russia
and these here all round are Catholics
watching up with quiet scrutiny—
strange for such intelligent people to be so deluded.
I don't know if there is a God
but if there were a Christ
his gentleness is here.

PERHAPS IN MELBOURNE

somewhere
perhaps in Melbourne
or East Anglia
or in Terenure
a young man in a quiet seat
is reading an evening paper
going home from evening work
he dreams he can run a record mile
he knows he has got the speed
and has planned his bid next month.

EPILOGUE

I dined in Suffolk Street
and an elder poet sat apart
with the presence of a Roman senator,
it was only outside did I know who he was
and I felt like running back to him
 but I didn't,
strangely I had nothing to say.



THE TRAGEDY OF CZECHOSLOVAKIA UNDER COMMUNIST RULE

by

SIDNEY Z. EHLER

IT was under the best possible conditions that the Czechoslovak republic was born fifty years ago, in October, 1918. All the three great powers which had for centuries determined the fate of Central Europe were knocked out of the political scene: Germany had been crushed in the cataclysm of World War I, Russia was convulsed in the grips of her revolution and civil war, and Austria-Hungary was disappearing altogether, leaving a great vacuum to be filled with a number of small States. At the peace congress of Versailles, the affairs of Central Europe were handled from far away by three western governments, those of France, England and the United States, all democratic and all favourably disposed to the traditionally democratic Czechs. They were busy establishing a barrier on the eastern border of Germany, composed of Czechoslovakia and Poland, which was to serve

as a wall against a potential revival of Berlin's pangermanic expansiveness. Therefore, to make Czechoslovakia strong, they applied the principle of the self-determination of peoples, the underlying maxim of the peace arrangement, only to the Czechs and Slovaks, not to the Sudeten Germans. Three millions of these were kept inside Czechoslovakia against their will.

This was a flaw in the new republic, an *origo mali*, destined to lead, twenty years later, to dramatic developments which culminated in the famous crisis and conference of Munich. In 1918, however, nobody could tell what the unpredictable future held in store for the nascent State, for which the augurs of the time had nothing but the best to predict. Its performance during those twenty years was surprising indeed. Led by Thomas Masaryk, the philosopher and founder of the State,

and his able associate, Edward Benes, Czechoslovakia shone for two decades like a beacon of sanity, decency and prosperity among the other Central European States which found it difficult to live up to the ideals of western democracy. Hungary, Poland, Yugoslavia, Rumania, unable to stand the strain of unfamiliar democratic procedures, sooner or later subsided into authoritarianism of a fascist or crypto-fascist kind, presided over by Admiral Horthy in Hungary, Marshal Pilsudski in Poland, and the kings Alexander and Carol in Yugoslavia and Rumania respectively.

All this post-Versailles set-up in Central Europe came to an end when, in 1938, Hitler challenged the obnoxious clauses of the Peace Treaty by claiming the Sudeten Germans for his all-German empire and by actually incorporating them into nazi Germany as a result of the Munich agreement. Meanwhile, in the period between 1918 and 1938, the Sudeten Germans had influenced the internal political evolution of Czechoslovakia to a considerable degree. Being adequately represented in the parliament but basically opposed to their unwanted co-existence with the Czechs in the new republic, they refrained from taking part in normal parliamentary life and in governmental responsibility, thus causing a coalition of disparate Czech parties to perpetuate itself and to last too long. The consequence of this was a great deal of immobility in the administration and a lack of imaginative measures which drove the dissatisfied working classes, hit in the late twenties and the early thirties by the world depression, to the extreme views of Communism. So it happened that, even before the war, the Communist party became an important factor in Czechoslovak politics.

After the Munich surrender, followed by the complete dismemberment of Czechoslovakia in 1939, hostility between the Czechs and the Sudeten Germans

reached its climax. Under the nazi occupation, it was the Sudeten Germans who were the worst haters of the Czechs, who drew up plans for their wholesale genocide or deportation to the Ural Mountains (in case of Hitler's victory over Russia), and who served as experts, informers and torturers in the Gestapo. Under the impact of this, President Benes and his government in exile raised the claim that the restored Czechoslovakia after the war must be free of the Sudeten Germans with whom the Czechs could hardly be expected to go on sharing a common homeland. He raised the claim that they should be expelled from the areas they inhabited to Germany, the country they had been opting for so ecstatically at the time of the Munich crisis.

His demand being rather unprecedented to the western minds the result was that in the councils of the allies at the end of the war, he got only Marshal Stalin to back wholeheartedly the idea of an *en bloc* expulsion of the Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia to Germany. Stalin was ready to give it his full support but not without a counter-claim which concerned—as the war was drawing to its end and the German defeat was already evident—the internal conditions of the revived Czechoslovak state. Before the war, the Czech Communist party had been constantly in opposition; now Stalin insisted on its becoming part of the national coalition which was to constitute the government in the reconquered republic. President Benes agreed, and he agreed to more than that: he gave his assent, under the pressure of the Czech Communist leader, Klement Gotwald, to the banning of the largest pre-war political force in Czechoslovakia, the agrarian party, under the unjust pretext that its leaders and members had collaborated with the nazis. The party was actually forbidden to re-build itself after the liberation; this, in point of fact, put the Communists from then on into a position of the leading

factor in the future government. The agreement between Benes and Stalin came into operation as soon as the Russian army entered the Czech territory in the spring of 1945; it was in the town of Kosice, in Eastern Slovakia, that the new government was formed and its programme announced. The date of this was the 4 April, 1945 and the programme contained surprises for the jubilant population. Not only the agrarians but all the right-wing political parties of pre-war Czechoslovakia were banned, and there were dark mentions in it about the need for nationalising the so-called "means of production" (i.e. industries, mines, railways, banks, insurance companies), about giving the ownership of land to those "who work on it", and about other things, clearly reminiscent of the old bolshevik slogans.

When the government moved, in May 1945, from the eastern borders of the state to Bohemia, following the advance of the Soviet army, another surprise came. Though the Americans, amidst the final stage of the German army's general collapse, had reached the area of Prague from the west faster than the Russians from the east, the troops of General Patton did not enter the Czech capital. They stopped at a short distance from Prague and waited until the Soviet divisions were able to arrive and occupy the city. The event was ominous, for it suggested that in some confidential undertaking between Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill concluded during the course of the war, Czechoslovakia had been allotted to the Soviets as part of their sphere of influence; the prestige of having liberated Prague had therefore to go to the Russians.

So the Czech independence had been restored under heavy clouds which gave rise, from the beginning, to sombre misgivings about its future. At the Potsdam conference of the victors of the war, in the summer 1945, Stalin did fulfill his part of the agreement with President Benes. He

enforced the expulsion of the Sudeten German population from Czechoslovakia to Germany, mostly to that part of it which is to-day the German Federal Republic. The expelees took this as a great collective tragedy and blatant injustice, thinking little of their own past record of enmity against the Czechs and of the cruelties perpetrated by many of them against their fellow-countrymen during the nazi occupation. But complaining loudly as they were to the whole world about the loss of their property and homeland, they could not know, in 1945, that while they had left behind a lot of what was dear to them, they were to retain something equally—if not more—precious which the Czechs were soon to lose: liberty and human dignity. Three years later, the Communist coup of Prague deprived the Czech and Slovak population of these values as well as of their possessions by way of a massive nationalisation, whereas the Sudeten Germans continued to enjoy—and do so up till now—not only the democracy of West Germany but also its *Wirtschaftswunder* which has allowed them to redress their material fortunes.

To many this solution of the generations-long strife between the two national groups, often evading the right assessment of their mutual recriminations, has a touch of supernatural, divine judgment. There had been wrongs on both sides. On the one hand, the Sudeten Germans had been allocated to Czechoslovakia in 1918 contrary to their natural wish to join the adjacent Germany in virtue of the principle of the self-determination of peoples. They subsequently maintained that they were discriminated against in the Czech State, especially when they had entrenched themselves in an attitude of alien aloofness which, later on, drove a considerable majority of them to embrace nazi doctrines. The Czech case against them, on the other hand, was that they had stubbornly refused to participate in the democratic life of the

country which they had shared with the Czechs for centuries, that they turned—out of hatred against their fellow-countrymen—enthusiastically to Hitler, helped him to disrupt the republic, and took afterwards an odious revenge on the Czechs through the medium of the Gestapo and other means of the Nazi terror. The final, and strangely equitable, solution of this long contest was that the Czechs did get rid of the Sudeten Germans and, as a sort of reparation for the damages inflicted upon them by the Germans, at Munich time and during the war, appropriated their possessions in the territories they had inhabited (rich in industry, mineral deposits and cultural achievements). But, individually, none of them was to be allowed for long to enjoy the fruits of this spoliation. Three years later, they were enslaved by a totalitarian régime and their newly acquired property was nationalised. The Sudeten Germans, on the contrary, were compensated for their expulsion by the security and prosperity of their new homes.

Another curious feature of this *origo mali*, which had handicapped the Czech State from the beginning of its existence, was the intertwining of the Sudeten problem with the rise of Czechoslovak Communism. Three stages can be discerned in this process.

In the pre-war years, governmental stagnation in Prague, largely due to the reluctance of the Sudeten Germans to take part in the interplay of parliamentary activities and to enter governments, pushed the Czech malcontents, critical of the stagnation, to Communism. Thus the Sudeten Germans were indirectly creating favourable conditions for the growth of the Communist party already in the 1920s. During the war, when President Benes conceived the radical solution of the Sudeten question by the forcible transfer of the German-speaking population from Czechoslovakia to Germany, he had to pay Stalin for the help in this with concessions

which laid the foundations for the Communist supremacy in the reconstituted republic. That was a second stage. Ultimately, when the derelict property of the expelees^{*} was being distributed in the former Sudeten areas to the new Czech settlers, this was done by Communist ministers in the coalition government, who had been duly equipped with the portfolios of interior, industry, commerce, and agriculture in order to be in charge of both the transfer of the expelled population to Germany and of the handing out of their possessions. They did not fail to manage both so as to shape in the resettled regions a well-organised Communist electorate which subsequently contributed to the rapid growth of their party and, eventually, to its seizure of power in February, 1948.

President Benes by no means intended to give up democracy after the war. Though he did make concessions to Stalin, his idea was to inject some socialist concepts into the structure of the renewed Czechoslovakia (not shrinking before a certain amount of nationalisation) but otherwise to keep a balance between marxism and liberal democracy, a sort of bridge between the western and the eastern society. He believed that his prestige was compelling enough to pilot the State to such an achievement and he frequently repeated that Marshal Stalin had given him a formal pledge that he would not interfere with the internal affairs of Czechoslovakia. In fact he did not, that is to say, not openly. It was, however, sufficient for the dynamic Communist party and for its skillful leader, Klement Gotwald, to have behind them all the might of the Soviet Union in order to defeat Benes's ambitions. The president had grown old during the war period, his health was deteriorating, and he was surrounded by yes-men who had spent the war with him in London and depended on his guidance. They were no match for the unscrupulous team, hungry for power, that Gotwald had brought from Moscow.

The strategy of the Communists was simple but efficacious. First they swelled their ranks with all the small fry of the former collaborators with the nazis by offering them shamelessly the party's protection in exchange for membership; they knew that those who benefited from this bargain would gladly become faithful and zealous Communists. Then they recruited further members while directing the operations of the resettlement of the Sudetenland. Simultaneously, they endeavoured to attract towards them the so-called "village proletariat" by partitioning larger estates in disregard of the existing law, and freely distributing land to those who were willing to vote for them. The combined effect of all this was that they emerged from the first post-war election as the strongest single party in the parliament. Gotwald became prime minister, appointed his nominees to the key-posts in the cabinet and, on 25 February, 1948, led his Workers' Militia to a frontal assault against the eroded edifice of the Czech democracy. President Benes, who had suffered two heart attacks, being in a state of physical collapse and his yes-men being unable to produce an energetic personality to take over the command in his stead, the Communist coup ended up without bloodshed in a pitiable submission of the leaderless democrats to triumphant Gotwald.

It took less than two further years to transform the nation which had enjoyed the highest standard of living in Central Europe into a community of disgruntled helots. The economy was nationalised, sweeping social changes were effected under the strict control of a Communist-nominated Council of Trade Unions, education and culture were forced into an ideological straight-jacket of the Russian pattern. In May, 1948, elections were held in which only government-sponsored candidates were admitted to be elected without opposition; over a million of the electors preferred to spoil their voting

papers. The new parliament ratified—unanimously—a new Constitution establishing a socialist republic and laying down a blueprint for "people's democracy", which President Benes refused to sign. He resigned over this issue on 7 June, 1948, and died three months later. Klement Gotwald succeeded him as president, leaving the premiership to Antonin Zapotocky, a trade union leader, and Czechoslovakia was submerged completely into the depths of Communist totalitarianism.

The submersion was to last twenty dark years, filled with the régime's effort to make the dispossessed nation work for the cause of the socialist community at home and abroad, while being cowed by the terror of deterrent mock trials. A bureaucratic police State was set up embracing all facets of human life, politics, culture, religion, as well as economic and social institutions. It was the economic sector that soon became the greatest worry to the government, for the original boastful promises of a general rise of the working classes' welfare after the disappearance of capitalism quickly evaporated when faced with realities. There followed a gradual decline of the régime's popularity, even with the rank and file of the Communist party, which made it increasingly difficult to spur up production, or even to maintain its pace, against the wall of mute discontent, flight from responsibility and manifold ways of petty sabotage. A five-year plan was drawn up—on the Soviet pattern—to operate from January 1949 to December 1953. Its purpose was to tighten the grip of the State on the economy and to bolster up yearly output in some fields, especially in that of heavy industry where the Russians—delighted as they were that they had, at last, got under their sway a highly industrialised country—were pressing for big deliveries of machinery, factory equipment and weapons. The subservient planners in Prague readily

obliged them by stepping up, in 1951, the aims of the five-year plan. But it soon appeared that even the original targets could hardly be attained, as the production of the industries was desperately lagging behind the fixed time limits. At that stage, a *coup de théâtre* took place.

In November of that year, 1951, Rudolf Slansky, a life-long bolshevik and the second in command of the Moscow-trained Czech Communists who had descended on Prague from Russia in 1945, was arrested by order of President Gottwald. This was the signal which touched off a large-scale purge in the highest strata of the régime's governmental "apparatus" and of the party's dignitaries, reminiscent of the conditions under which Stalin and Trotsky clashed some twenty-five years before in Russia after the death of Lenin. Like Trotsky, Rudolf Slansky (his real name was Rudolf Salzmann) was a Jew and most of the victims of the purge that followed his arrest were also Jewish. They had formed a *camarilla* around him inside the party (Slansky had been the secretary-general of the party and vice-premier of the government) and by striking at them cruelly and unexpectedly Gottwald was able to kill, in the best Stalinist tradition, several birds with one stone. He got rid of a redoubtable rival who shared with him the gloriole of the victory over democracy in the coup of February 1948, he annihilated a group of conspirators and potential rebels against his authority, and he found scapegoats to whose sinister activities, betrayal of the working class and espionage for the western capitalists, he could ascribe the failures of the five-year plan. For good measure, again in line with Stalin's ways of proceeding in Russia, he extended the purge to a few *old hands* in which culprits of various offences against the party's purity had already been awaiting punishment for some time. Among them Vladimir Clementis, another life-long bolshevik, creator of the Communist party

in Slovakia and minister for foreign affairs after the coup of 1948, was thrown into the Slansky hecatomb being accused of subversive plotting with the nationalist elements in Slovakia.

It took a year to prepare Slansky and his associates for their trial, the last of the great mock-trials of the Stalinist era. Russian advisers were doubtless active behind the scenes in the preparation of the case in Czech courts, for the technique and the smooth running of the proceedings, with the accused abjectly confessing to their alleged crimes, were reminiscent of the famous Moscow trials in which Stalin had disposed of his own rivals in the leadership of the Soviet Union, Kamenev, Sinoviev, Bucharin and others. During their detention in custody, the prisoners had undergone a systematic undermining of their nervous system by limited diet, limited sleep and ceaseless, repetitive interrogations by the magistrates who kept hammering into their mind what they were expected to confess in the court-room. There exists remarkable evidence of the methods applied to them by the Czech police, provided by an Israeli citizen named Mordechai Oren. An official delegate of the Israeli Trade Union Congress, he happened to find himself in Prague at the time of the police scoop against Slansky and his group. Having been also arrested, he was subjected to the same treatment, as he was to be a witness for the prosecution to supply evidence of the group's guilty relations with the Jewish Sionists in Palestine. He survived both the treatment and the trial, was later released and, on his return to Israel, wrote a book in which he described his first-hand experience with Communist justice and the Czech jails. In the treatment of the prisoners the goal was not to bring about their nervous breakdown, but artfully to diminish the resistance of their nerves and of their will-power by an incessant chain of interrogations at irregular intervals during day and night, in which mild and

wild tones of the magistrates alternated in repeating the same questions and demanding the same answers; these they wanted the victims to learn by heart. Having reached the point when they became malleable puppets in the hands of the prosecutors, confessing without any apparent compulsion all they had been taught to confess, they were ready for the trial.

Slansky, Clementis and a number of their co-defendants were tried, condemned, and hanged in November 1952. The date is noteworthy, for it marks the culminating impact of the Communist rule on Czechoslovakia. At the end of the purge, the concept of Stalinist uniformity and monolithic orthodoxy reigned supreme under the undisputed leadership of Klement Gotwald. He had eliminated all potential opposition, rivals and deviationists alike, at one mighty blow, not sparing the closest of his old comrades-in-arms. Nothing could have better pleased the Kremlin than the destruction of the Slansky clique, composed mostly of Jews. Stalin himself was at that time in a strongly anti-semitic vein, pretending that he had broken a ring of the so-called "white blouses", the doctors in the Kremlin hospital for the highest Communist elite, all of Israelite origin, whom he believed had been plotting against his life.

Simultaneously, towards the end of 1952, the glorification of the dictatorial leaders, a characteristic feature of the time, was also reaching its climax. Innumerable honours were rendered to Gotwald by the servile apparatus of the party's executives, including the re-naming of a town, in his native Moravia, to be known as Gotwaldov, while in the Czech capital an enormous statue of Stalin, 200,000 pounds in weight, had been erected on one of the seven hills on which Prague is situated, to overlook the city and impersonate the triumph of bolshevism on the most western rampart of the Soviet empire. The apotheosis, however, was not to last long.

On 5 March, 1953, Joseph Stalin died and was followed to the grave, nine days later, by Klement Gotwald who died after a very short illness on his return from the Moscow funeral of his master, on 14 March. Although the official sources announced that his departing was due to pneumonia, a rumour kept circulating for some time to the effect that he had been poisoned. He was buried with great pomp in an impressive mausoleum on another of Prague's hills, but the peak of the Communist rule over Czechoslovakia passed on the day of his burial and from that on, the course took a downward direction which led a few years later to the eviction of the embalmed bodies of both Gotwald and Stalin from their respective mausolea and to the blowing up of the huge Stalin statue in Prague with repeated charges of dynamite. The heroic epoch of Communism was over and a period rejecting the cult of personalities had begun.

The successor to Gotwald behind the presidential desk was the colourless Antonin Zapotocky, a former coal miner and trade-unionist organiser, who had spent the war in a German concentration camp. Far from the revolutionary flamboyance of Gotwald and Slansky, the Moscow-educated stars of the cosmopolitan Third International, he was a dull, pedestrian product of the home-made brand of Communism, who could hardly appeal to the imagination of any of the more intelligent followers. Seconded by an even duller character in the person of his prime minister, William Siroky, a Slovak, he certainly was not the man to galvanize industrial production and to rescue the five-year plan. On the contrary, he started his administration with a currency reform which only worsened the economic situation and deepened the creeping dissatisfaction. This was a measure devised to stop inflation by reducing real wages but it only added to the general social malaise. It provoked indignation

among the workers and riots took place, especially in the important Skoda Works at Plzen. In any case, smaller wages could not create the much-needed incentive for an increase of productivity; rather, declining standards were rapidly becoming the central problem of the Czechoslovak national economy.

At the same time, things were made more difficult by the régime's concurrent performance in agriculture. A senseless, doctrinaire collectivisation of the land and a simultaneous drain of the man-power from it caused a serious crisis in agricultural production. It was marked by the exodus from the farms of younger people who, disgusted with the new conditions of life in the villages, started migrating in great numbers to the towns where the government itself welcomed them; it needed more and more workers for the continuously expanding heavy industry. Czechoslovakia being the only satellite of Russia capable of supplying in large quantities the products of this industry, the Kremlin planners kept insisting on its extension by setting up new factories. The submissive Czech bosses obeyed, but the labour for these factories could only come from the villages, with disastrous effects on agriculture. Thus the government at Prague was turning in a vicious circle; to please the Russians, it had to siphon man-power from the country into industry; and by helping to deplete the villages of the members of the younger generation, only too willing as they were to flee the life on land, it was causing grave harm to agricultural productivity. As a result, an estimate made in the late 1950s showed that the average age of the workers on the collectivised farms in Czechoslovakia was sixty years.

Still worse times were to come under the next administration. Lamented by nobody, President Zapotocky, while still in office, died in November, 1957. He was succeeded by a man who was destined to bring to an

end any interest that Communism was still able to stimulate, though less and less, in the feelings of the so-called "working masses". He was Antonin Novotny, then fifty-three years old, a Communist of long standing but little known to the general public. Apart from some glowing, if rather vague, allusions to his record in the anti-nazi resistance during the war, all that people knew about him was that his career had evolved in the secrecy of the party's oligarchic machinery where he succeeded in getting elected, after the death of Gotwald, to the key-position of the party's secretary-general. He was a perfect *aparatchik*, i.e., an incarnation of the party's bureaucratic apparatus. Without education or natural intelligence, without popularity at home and without much knowledge of the international Communist milieu abroad, he excelled only in the art of handling shrewdly the other *aparatchiks* and maintaining his authority over them by rough methods. With these limitations, he was for the Russians the ideal manager of a satellite country. He was elected president by the deputies of the parliament unanimously, while retaining his position as secretary-general of the party. Two representatives of the Soviet government, the Marshals Voroshilov and Konev who had been sent to Prague for the funeral of Zapotocky, attended the election.

He did fulfil Moscow's expectations. It was under his rule that Czechoslovakia became the perfect model of a vassal-state of the Soviet Union, in which the wishes, or even hints, of the Kremlin's chiefs were attended to at once and without demur. In foreign affairs, his subservience to them was complete; in home politics everything was done, regardless of the cost to the nation and State, primarily with a view to pleasing the Kremlin. The collectivization of agriculture was continued and so was the building up of heavy and armament industry, the products of which the Soviet Union was apportioning to Vietnam, to

Cuba, to the Congo, to the Arab states in the Middle East, to Nigeria, and to her other customers all over the world. Apart from Russia itself, Czechoslovakia was the greatest contributor to the Soviet block's programme of foreign aid, supplying up to twenty *per cent.* of its total volume. In many cases this aid consisted in transactions effected at pure loss, as no payment, remuneration, or even gratitude could be expected from the recipients. In Ghana alone, at the time of its government's flirtation with the Soviets, hundreds of millions' worth of Czech arms, machinery and other goods were delivered to the corrupt Nkrumah régime, all of which had to be written off after its ignominious downfall. In neighbouring Guinea, governed by the no less extravagant establishment of the leftish President Sékou Touré, a host of Czechoslovak experts, instructors and administrators of the Soviet block's foreign aid are still roaming the country, awaiting with misgivings another inglorious end of their thankless task.

This prodigality abroad ill-matched the steady deterioration of the Czechoslovak economy at home. The equipment of the Czech industry had been run down and was becoming antiquated. It had been exploited extensively during the war by the nazi occupants for the benefit of the German war effort. It remained untouched and unmodernised after 1948, as under the Communist governments the emphasis was constantly put on the creation of new industries, not on the re-equipment of the old ones. This, and the impossible system of directing all economic life from the central bureau of the ministries in Prague, engendered an atmosphere of despondency and dejection which was gradually pervading the nation at all levels. Inevitably, the working morale sank very low. No amount of trite propaganda, repeating for years on end the same discredited phrases about the glory of building up an ideal socialist world, could arrest its disinte-

gration; the workers were well aware of the waste of their own assets in exotic lands while at home there was no money to raise wages, to amplify social services, or to ameliorate the poor out-put and distribution of consumer goods. No wonder that in this climate another five-year plan, for the period from 1961 to 1965, had to be abandoned in 1962 when only half of the year's programme had been achieved in the first twelve months of its operation.

The story of the economic mismanagement, underlying the doom and fall of President Novotny's administration, is equalled, if not surpassed by, the record of its activities in the sphere of spiritual values, notably those of religion and culture. It was there that the Czech Communists had displayed the greatest zeal to apply thoroughly the old bolshevik tenets, devised by Lenin many decades earlier for the backward Russia of the nineteenth century. Full submission of human intellect to political authority, maintained by censorship, obscurantism and the extensive use of the police in the realm of ideas, was imposed on the Czechs to a degree which made the oppression of which they had complained under the Hapsburg monarchy in the pre-1914 Austria-Hungary look like child's play. It was there, however, that the totalitarian organisers overreached themselves and harvested the most dismal of their failures. After almost a quarter of a century of an all-out indoctrination, the repressed spiritual values arose from their ashes, like the Phoenix, to provoke the first tremors of the approaching earthquake which was to be fatal for the Novotny government.

As for Christianity and the Catholic Church, their ordeal reached its culmination at the beginning of the 1960s, soon after Antonin Novotny took over. Their persecution had begun immediately after the coup of 1948. The circumstances and general background of this invite explanation.

It was at the end of World War II that Communism, having established itself in Central European states, was confronted in them for the first time in its governmental experience with large majorities of Catholic populations. This was the case of the entirely Catholic Poland as well as of Hungary and Czechoslovakia, two countries with a Catholic majority of roughly seventy *per cent.* of their inhabitants. The Polish Catholics being too numerous and entrenched in a special position caution was required in handling their religious issues; the unmitigated application of the atheist drive, prescribed by Lenin for the extermination of Christianity and its Churches, did not take place there. But it did in Hungary and, even to a greater degree, in Czechoslovakia. The tactics of this drive, inspired by the sections of the Russian bolshevik party's programme of 1919 relative to religion, contained, for the Catholic Church, three main features: an intense antagonism against her central authority, the Papacy (the Vatican being represented as a "hostile foreign power" whose jurisdiction and influence were incompatible with the sovereignty of a "people's democracy"); a tendency to discredit and discard the local hierarchy by accusing them of various crimes and of subservience to the Vatican; an effort to create pro-Communist currents among the clergy and the faithful, willing to co-operate with the régime. All this was to be accompanied by a virulent atheist propaganda, carried out by the Communist party and its fellow-travellers' organisations.

In Czechoslovakia, after the coup of 1948, the Gotwald government engaged at first in negotiations with the Catholic episcopate, headed by Monsignor (now Cardinal) Beran, archbishop of Prague. They alleged that they did so in order to adapt the position of the Church to the "people's democracy", with particular regard to the conditions obtaining after the enactment of the decrees concerning

nationalization and the radical land reform which had deprived the Church of most of her revenues. But owing to the lack of the government's good-will no progress could be made. This was taken as a pretext for a campaign of press and wireless propaganda against the bishops, who were accused of obeying the orders of the Vatican and sabotaging the negotiations. At the same time a movement of dissident and pro-governmental "Catholic Action" was staged; it was to represent a spontaneous upheaval of the faithful, assisted by a handful of collaborationist priests, against the hierarchy.

To this the Church replied by a prompt excommunication *expressis verbis* of all participants, pronounced in a special decree of the Roman Congregation of the Holy Office on 20 June, 1949. Subsequently, the Czechoslovak bishops severely condemned the collaborationist movement in a collective pastoral letter which was read out, in spite of police vigilance, in the churches all over the country in July, 1949. These censures, together with the general excommunication of the Communists, decreed in Rome on 1 July, 1949, made a deep impression on the faithful; as a result, the schismatic "Catholic Action" was ostracised and boycotted.

Thereupon the government took resolute measures. They arrested Monsignor Beran, thus depriving the episcopate of its leader, and confined the bishops in their palaces, investing special State commissioners, largely police officers, with the management of the dioceses through episcopal Consistories. Among the lower clergy, many of those who firmly opposed the dissident movement were imprisoned. But apart from this initial persecution of the non-conformers among the clergy, the main step to subdue the Church as a whole was reserved to the silently efficacious weapon of the law. The principal piece of the stringent legislation, introduced in 1949, was the law on the State control over the

material possessions of the Churches. It was so formulated as to be applicable to all Churches; however, as the Protestants did not make any noteworthy attempt to resist Communism—and were therefore considered by the régime as not dangerous—it was, for all practical purposes, against the Catholic Church that the law had been conceived and directed.

Its goal was a complete *étatization* of the Church, the bringing of the Church under the State, which was to be achieved by four means:

(a) The clergy were placed on the same footing as State officials. No one was to be appointed to a Church office without previous approval of the State authorities. To be eligible, he must fulfil all the conditions laid down for State officials, among which the “political reliability”—i.e. the proved adherence, at least passive, to the régime—was all-important. He also has to take the oath of fidelity to the “people’s democracy”. The episcopal sees fell under the scope of these provisions like any other Church offices.

(b) The Church having been despoiled of her revenues by the land reform and the nationalisation of her funds and buildings, the State took over her financial up-keep. Detailed lists of the remaining ecclesiastical property, including purely liturgical objects, had been drawn up and no alienation of it nor any other change were permitted without sanction of the State authorities.

(c) The clergy approved by the government were to receive salaries from the State, analogous to those of the State officials.

(d) A State Office for Ecclesiastical Affairs, enjoying the status of a ministry, was established and entrusted with the control and supervision of the Churches.

This *étatization* of the Church, her total subjection to the State, was only one half of the Communist tactics in the drive to wipe out religion. Its purpose was to silence

the Church so that, gagged and rendered impotent by the tight control of the State, she could not fight back against the other half of the Communist strategy: the fierce and endless campaign of militant atheism, poured out from the press, radio, television, and other mass-media of political propaganda.

The law of 1949 put at the government’s disposal means of destroying gradually the whole organism of the Catholic Church, and for fifteen years the régime was busy implementing these means to the utmost. After the arrest of Monsignor Beran, which occurred on 18 June, 1949, most of the bishops disappeared and became incommunicado in places of confinement or in prisons, so that ten out of the country’s thirteen episcopal sees lost their lawful ordinaries. They were replaced by vicars capitular, chosen from among the priests who were pliable enough to be acceptable to the régime; from the Church’s point of view they could not be regarded as true shepherds of their flocks, since it was impossible to elect them freely. They were, anyway, under a close watch by the government officials, sitting in the Consistories and attending to their every-day running of Church affairs.

Religious Orders of both men and women were liquidated in 1950. The members were moved from their houses to “concentration convents” and used as forced labour in factories, on the land and in forestry. There were some temporary exceptions regarding the nursing Orders of nuns, who were allowed to stay on in hospitals until a sufficient number of lay nurses was available to take their place. When this happened, they also were sent to factories except for a small number of them, retained in institutions for patients suffering from incurable illnesses or in homes for old people, for which lay nurses could not be found. All religious Orders were supposed to die out as soon as possible. They were strictly forbidden to accept

vocations among young people and those of their members who had sought contact with the young generation, or who had been concerned with recruitment, were put on trial and sentenced to long terms of imprisonment.

The clergy at large was ultimately to meet with the same fate. The diocesan seminaries and theological institutes of the Orders were closed in 1950. Later the government established two State seminaries, one for Czech and the other for Slovak students, each limited, in all classes, to a total of a hundred clerics. The admission of students was very restricted; in 1964, at the beginning of the "thaw", eighty-one candidates applied for admission to the Slovak seminary, but only twenty were permitted to enter. The recruitment became a matter of lengthy proceedings in which the background and the personality of each applicant were minutely scrutinised. Such things as a deeply religious family life or bright intellectual qualities were generally an obstacle to admission. The final word about selecting seminarists belonged to various committees of the Communist party acting on the basis of reports of the secret police, whose duty it was to search for "suitable" candidates. As the would-be seminarists were quite aware of these procedures, they frequently camouflaged their political and social outlook by taking jobs in factories prior to their seeking admission to the seminary. As a rule, however, the least well qualified, especially from the point of view of intelligence, were preferred. At any rate, the number of the yearly ordinations of new priests was far below that which was required to replace the old ones who had died or retired, so that the country's spiritual administration shrank, in time, to a skeleton service; its normal pattern was that one priest, usually ageing and always surrounded by local spies, was in charge of several parishes, the inhabitants of which were dissuaded by all channels of indoctrination and personal

pressure from the practice of their religion.

In this respect, the Communist party's ideologists were doing their best. They did keep to the classical maxim, devised by Lenin in the programme of the bolshevik movement in 1919 to the effect that no martyrs should be made in the struggle against Christianity, and that only a little amount of competition between religion and Communism should be tolerated. This had been recommended by Lenin in his confident belief that Communism was so superior to the old-fashioned "opium of the people" that it would extirpate, by sheer persuasion, the use of it in a matter of a few decades. When formulating this directive, Lenin took, of course, into account that the bolshevik State would not let any Church be so organised and so strong as to be able efficiently to resist the State-sponsored offensive of atheism. The Communist bosses of Czechoslovakia shared his opinion. Conscious of the unlimited possibilities of their totalitarian power, they allowed even a small amount of religious instruction in the schools for those who would ask for it. But the parents who did so, and insisted on sending their children to the classes on Christian religion, had to face the consequences. The adherence to "religious superstitions" became one of the main tests by which political reliability and submissiveness were measured. It played an important part in getting jobs, in promotions and demotions, in nominations to responsible posts, in admission to universities and so on. The Church-goers were black-listed, frequently subjected to inquisitive interviews with their superiors as to their political views, and their children were held up to scorn in front of their classmates. In short, those who persevered in their faith were officially stigmatized as the black sheep of the nation, and all was done to make them abandon their religion.

The same climate of oppression, authoritarianism, intimidation and narrow-mindedness prevailed also in cultural life.

Though the six years of Nikita Khrushchev's reign in Russia (1956-1962) had brought about a period of moderate liberalization in the Communist world, this touched Czechoslovakia very little. Continuing their stiff line of a police state at home while licking the boots in Moscow, President Novotny and his clique managed to evade de-stalinisation and to go on with the old methods. By then, however, they were ruling over a people which had fallen into deep apathy, having ceased to be interested in politics, economics, five-year plans, building up socialism, struggle against foreign imperialism, or any other of the virtues of a classless society.

It was only in 1962 that the first breath of a wind of change could be felt; it came from international developments and originated in the relations between State and Church. Part of Khrushchev's novel theory of peaceful co-existence between Communism and capitalism had been an improvement of the Kremlin's attitude towards the Holy See. This survived Khrushchev, his successors Brezhnev and Podgorny went even so far as to visit the Pope in Rome, and the new policy manifested itself especially in connection with the Second Vatican Council. Bishops from Poland and other countries behind the Iron Curtain, including the Soviet Union, got the permission to take part in the Council and to speak and vote there freely. This resuscitated for Czechoslovakia the dormant question of her episcopate and, through it, the question of the whole relationship between the republic and the Catholic Church. Under the pressure of external events, the government of Prague decided to make some concessions to the Church, the first after fifteen years of an all-out persecution. They allowed three bishops to attend the Council in Rome, two of whom belonged to the pre-1948 episcopate; the third was Monsignor Frantisek Tomasek, an auxiliary bishop of Olomouc, who had been secretly consecrated in 1949, at the beginning of the

persecution, but never acknowledged by the State authorities. They also started negotiations with the Vatican which later, in February 1965, led to the release of Monsignor Beran from confinement after seventeen years of detention, on the condition that he would leave the country immediately; at the same time Monsignor Tomasek, while attending the Vatican Council, was recognised as a bishop and nominated administrator of the archdiocese of Prague. That was the first shake-up of the government: after having for fifteen years treated the Church of Silence high-handedly as moribund and irrelevant, and heaped abuse on the Holy See as an abhorrent and anachronistic agent of reaction, they were now climbing down and agreeing to dealings with both the Pope and their own bishops.

A second shake-up came soon afterwards, in 1963. A group of de-stalinisers on the central committee of the Czech Communist party enforced the opening of an enquiry into the inside story of the trials in which, ten years earlier, Slansky and his associates had been condemned and sent to the gallows. Appalling details emerged from the investigation and were embodied in a report which the party's first secretary, President Novotny, had to read out—most reluctantly—at a meeting of the central committee in April 1963. The resulting rehabilitation of the victims was carried out with considerable difficulties, only after the elaborate manoeuvres of the ruling circle to prevent it, had failed. This was the first major clash in the ranks of the Czech Communist party.

Third in the line of evils clamouring for urgent attention was the economic situation. A movement arose among the Communist party's economists, strongly critical of the immobility of the government and of its inept clinging to the bureaucratic methods of planning which had caused general stagnation. As the only way out of this state of affairs, a group of reformers

headed by professor Ota Sik, a life-long Communist though of the post-war generation, advanced a bold scheme aiming at the transformation of the centralized and uniform planning of economy into one based on a relatively free and competitive market. In the system they advocated, the governmental authorities in Prague would keep powers of supervision, but individual factories and other State-owned units would be free to adapt themselves autonomously to the requirements of a liberalised market in order to prosper and to expand. Keeping their budget in balance, the directors and staff could—though remaining State employees, appointed, promoted and dismissed by their governmental superiors—share with the State the profits which they would be able to make. This meant no return to capitalism but, psychologically, the incentive of more elasticity in management and of bonuses for good results was considered as essential to redress the low working morale, which was causing widespread indifference and laziness. A similar system had been introduced in Yugoslavia and proved quite successful there. But the example of the heretical Yugoslavia did not commend it to the dogmatic mind of Antonin Novotny. No such radical reform of socialist economy being envisaged in the Soviet Union, the president of Czechoslovakia had to be compelled by the more and more alarming statistical figures to give it only a half-hearted assent. Afraid as he was, however, of being regarded in Moscow as a deviationist, he did his best to put it off.

Finally, the fourth blow, which shook the régime to its foundations, came from the literary world of writers, artists, journalists, film producers and other intellectuals. For twenty years, they had been governed by a stern ideological dictatorship but now, amidst the mounting criticisms of all the malcontents, they began to stir. The first outburst of their impatience with the stubbornly conservative ways of

the party's ideological leadership, which had appeared in periodicals, books and films, having entailed irritating repressive measures, the movement was rapidly gathering strength. In June 1967, a congress of the Union of Writers was held in Prague. At its first meeting, a young, little known member of the Union, Ludvik Vaculik, delivered an inflammatory speech which was a skilful summary of the writers' grievances, spelled out without over-stepping the limits of doctrinaire marxism, but warmed up with flashes of un-marxist humanism. "It is indispensable to realise", he exclaimed, "that no human problem has been resolved in our country in the last twenty years—from such elementary needs as housing, schools and economic prosperity to the beautiful aspects of life which no undemocratic system can provide, for instance the feeling of achieving one's full value in society, the subordination of political decisions to ethical criteria, the belief in the importance of work, even subaltern, the necessity of confidence in the relations between men, or the possibility of education, placed within the reach of all members of the nation."

A storm of approval followed, which the chief ideologist of the Communist party, Jiri Hendrych, tried in vain to calm. He walked out of the congress and presently another round of heavy-handed sanctions descended on the restive writers. A fresh law on censorship was enacted, adding more fuel to the flames, and a tug-of-war ensued between the government's cultural commissars and the Union of Writers. Soon after, however, the writers found allies in University students when, in November 1967, vehement clashes occurred between riot police and the students complaining about the material conditions in which they had to live in the State-owned hostels. Thereupon an extraordinary thing happened: the Communist press, especially its organs catering for the young, for the first time in the régime's history side-

tracked the official version of the origin of the riots and, voicing the anger of the students, ventured to demand an impartial and public enquiry into the police brutalities during the riots.

It was in a tense atmosphere that the year 1967 came to a close; the president and his old guard being now clearly on the defensive against the attacks which were converging on them from all sides: from the economists, from the intellectuals, from the students, and from the opposition inside the party's central committee. The decisive confrontation was to take place in the Praesidium of the central committee which, in the Communist countries, is an all-important seat of political power. Over a report of a sub-committee which had been entrusted with drafting a paper on the correct rôle of the Communist party in the socialist State (according to the doctrine of Lenin, not that of Stalin), the Praesidium split into two groups, almost equal: six progressives and four conservatives, but no vote was taken. The issue was referred to a plenary session of the whole central committee. This may have been agreed to for tactical reasons, but it proved fateful for the further developments. The delay deepened the crisis and gave it a dramatic twist which was to lead to the glorious "spring of Prague" and, ultimately, by a chain of causes and consequences, to the tragedy of the Soviet invasion.

The weeks separating the meeting of the Praesidium from that of the Plenum of the central committee were filled with events increasing the discord in all its aspects, both internal and external. Leonid Brezhnev, the Russian "Big Brother", arrived in Prague allegedly to mediate between the quarrelling factions, but in reality to buttress Novotny's position. He was told by the de-stalinisers—among whom the star of Alexander Dubcek had already begun to rise—politely though firmly to mind his own business. Dubcek added that the Czechs were prepared to talk about the

party's problems in general with the Russians but had no intention of discussing their own affairs with foreigners. That was a sign of a new attitude, highly insolent in the eyes of the Russians and never heard of before in the relations between Moscow and Prague. Things came to a head when Novotny, losing ground desperately to his adversaries, commanded two armoured divisions to be ready to roll on Prague and played with the idea of calling up the Workers' Militia, a para-military organisation of Communist veterans which had been instrumental in defeating the democrats in the coup of 1948. An uproar broke out in Prague, ministers refused to carry out the president's orders, and a close friend of Novotny, General Sejna, held responsible for the military moves, abandoned the president's standard by fleeing the country and defecting to the Americans.

On 19 December, with the tanks still waiting in the vicinity of the capital, the climactic session of the full central committee opened in Prague. After a tempestuous debate, it was evident that the swing of the pendulum was moving to the progressives, leaving the right wing in a minority, though still a sizeable one. The session lasted four days and broke up for a pause at Christmas in high but suppressed excitement, with the issue undecided. It remained adjourned for a fortnight and Dubcek with his friends were able to put the time to good use. When the meeting reconvened on 5 January, 1968, the vote was unanimous; even Jiri Hendrych, the President's right hand man and severe guardian of ideological rectitude, had changed camps. Novotny was deposed from the post of secretary-general of the party and replaced by Dubcek. He remained president of the republic, but not for long; a few weeks later, he was ousted from that function also.

So the spring came to Prague after a reluctant thaw, and there was much

rejoicing all over the country. The beaten conservatives were eliminated from the government, from the parliament and from the party's direction, censorship was lifted, the gates of the jails were thrown open to let out thousands of political prisoners, a new president and government were elected, plans for economic recovery were speeded up, and restrictions on travel abroad were abolished so that hundreds of thousands of Czechs could, for the first time in their lives and with a meagre allowance in foreign money, cross the frontier to discover the western world. A programme of wholesale, gradual liberalisation of the Communist institutions was drawn up by enthusiastic reformers who, while maintaining these institutions within their marxian context, were endeavouring to remove their sinister features and "give Communism a human face".

Nor were the relations between Church and State neglected in the fervour of innovation. There was an evil spirit among the outgoing reactionaries, a cabinet minister who had managed to keep his seat in all the governments of the stalinist era, from that of Gotwald in 1948 to that of Novotny in 1968. He was Josef Plojhar, an unfrocked priest and Communist fellow-traveller who, in 1948, brought over to the Communists the remnants of the old Catholic party which he had torn asunder. For this, he was rewarded by being made Minister for Health, to which post he stuck for twenty years only to be thrown out, together with the other stalinists, by Dubcek in April 1968. Though holding the portfolio of health, he had been the expert and *éminence grise* of the régime on the Catholic Church. He had founded a "Peace Movement" among the Catholic clergy of Czechoslovakia which, occasionally, staged manifestations for the peace in Korea or in Vietnam but, in reality, served as a cloak for an organisation of collaborationist priests. There were not many of these but they acquired a great deal of

influence in the relations between Church and State, as it was from among them that the nominees of the State to the more important ecclesiastical appointments were chosen. With the downfall of the stalinist establishment, Plojhar was stripped of all his functions and the "Peace Movement", of which he had been the immovable chairman, was disbanded.

One of the main obstacles, blocking the way to a betterment in the relations between Church and State, was thus disposed of and soon other hopeful measures caused the Church wholeheartedly to join the chorus of those who acclaimed the advent of the "democratic Communism". One piece of good news followed another and on 19 April, 1968, Monsignor Tomášek, the administrator of the archdiocese of Prague, could depart, unfettered, for Rome to depict to the Holy Father the rosy image of the Prague spring.

The first relaxation, most appreciated by the Church, was the dropping of the *numerus clausus* imposed on clerical vocations. In normal times, there had been thirteen diocesan seminaries in Czechoslovakia, which trained a thousand priests a year; the two seminaries, tolerated by the Communist *ancien régime*, produced in 1966 a total of twenty-four priests and only nineteen in 1967. The result was that in the archdiocese of Prague, at the moment of President Novotny's fall, three hundred and fifteen priests were in charge of six hundred and twenty-two parishes. The new government promised to remedy this by a speedy re-opening of another two seminaries and by abolishing the limitations concerning the enrolment of their students. This perspective of a revival of spiritual life was not to be restricted to the Roman Catholic Church alone. In April 1968, some one hundred and fifty priests of the Greek Catholic Church, the Uniates, were allowed to assemble at Kosice, in Slovakia, in order to demand the resumption of their autonomous religious worship under the authority

of a re-installed Uniate bishop. The government agreed. The Uniate Church, flourishing in the pre-war time in the areas of Slovakia bordering on Poland and on the Soviet republic of Ukraine, had been entirely suppressed in 1950 and forcibly incorporated into the Russian Orthodox Church.

A further reason for the Catholics to rejoice was the new government's consent to the return to religious activities of fifteen hundred priests who had been barred from exercising their ministry and assigned to jobs in industry and agriculture. There were high ecclesiastical dignitaries among them (such as the bishop of Hradec Kralove who had worked over fifteen years as a lorry-driver in a dairy), as well as many members of religious Orders. The Orders, however, have not come back into existence and continue to be dissolved; the new régime has not committed itself to any concession in this respect, nor has it made any clear-cut decision with regard to religious instruction in the schools. Staunch atheists as they are, the members of the new governmental team are not prepared to diverge from that precept of leninism which insists on sustained struggle against Christianity and on conversion of the "masses" to godlessness. But they may concede—if they stay in power—fair play in the sense that the parents would be given the right to determine, without intimidation, the mode of education of their children and their religious instruction. If this ever comes true, it would be a unique test to find out how far two decades of hard marxist indoctrination could affect the spiritual mind of an old Christian nation.

The most difficult question, however, is that of the hierarchy. Even if inclined to display benevolent moderation, a Communist régime can hardly be expected to agree to the exercise of religious authority in its territory by dignitaries who would be stiffly hostile not only to the Communist party's programme but also to the social

order and political institutions of a socialist State. This type of die-hard bishop, frequently personified in Communist arguments by the Hungarian Cardinal Mindszenty, being for them unacceptable, the delicate question arises: where to draw the line of an episcopal candidate's acceptability to a Communist government, and how to devise machinery, satisfactory to both Church and State, for the selection of the suitable candidates?

A Communist State may turn more liberal in its political outlook and may permit a freer competition in the philosophical controversy between Christianity and marxism but when it comes to an honest settlement with the Catholic Church, it has to emphasize some conditions: fundamental loyalty of the bishops to the régime; their adjustment to the social order in which they would be called upon to discharge their duties; and a reasonable assurance that they would not engage in political subversion. The Catholic Church, on the other hand, cannot subscribe to elevating to the episcopal dignity of clerics of the category of ex-Father Plojhar's "Priests of Peace", who are little more than agents of the State, employed by it to erode the stand of the Church and to contribute to her decline. The type of a middle-way man is difficult to define, and more difficult still to find. The Communists would like the candidates to be relatively young and integrated in the social milieu of their society in which they would have spent both their early and formative years, and never have seen anything else. The Church can appreciate this point but she would fear that nominees of that kind may not offer guarantees of a sufficient sense of solidarity with the Church at large, and of obedience to the central jurisdiction of the Holy See. Besides, the generation of the Czechs who had never had any receptive experience of another social system than the Communist one have not yet reached the age level required for a bishop—those who were

eight years old in 1948 are only twenty-eight years old in 1968. All these aspects of the problem of the hierarchy make it crucially difficult to find a satisfactory arrangement between the Catholic Church and the Communist State in the future.

Feelers towards the Vatican had been sent out from Prague already in the Novotny era and the ensuing negotiation was not futile. Its consequence was the first alleviation in the harsh treatment of the bishops and the release of Cardinal Beran. It soon reached a deadlock, however, largely due to the intricate problem of the episcopal nominations. If the negotiations are actively resumed under the post-Novotny régime, they may take place in a better climate, inspiring more confidence on both sides, but the basic considerations underlying their respective view-points in the question of the Catholic hierarchy will present well nigh insurmountable problems.

In spite of the State's conciliatory gestures, the ecclesiastical situation in Czechoslovakia is still heavily burdened with the legacy of the last twenty years. The legislation which had set up the *étatisation* of the Church has not been rescinded. Four old bishops have been allowed to return to their residences after a long absence. If they are really reinstated in their full jurisdiction, only five of the country's thirteen bishoprics will have lawful ordinaries, the fifth being Monsignor Frantisek Tomasek whose appointment as administrator of the archbishopric of Prague was agreed to by the Church and the State in 1965. In the remainder of the dioceses, the question of the new nominations is still wide open.

As for other clergy, Monsignor Tomasek declared in Rome, during his stay there last April, that on 1 April, 1968, three thousand priests were working in the spiritual administration of the country, which, normally, requires at least double that number. In 1948, at the beginning of the Communist rule, he added, there had been

7,000 priests in Czechoslovakia, 5,000 secular and 2,000 regular. But things were improving now, he said. Since the abolition effected early this year by the Dubcek régime, of the restrictions on the number of clerics to be admitted to the two existing seminaries, the enrolment of students in both of them put together has gone up to the record figure of three hundred and fifty for one academic year, 1968/69. This, and the other expressions of the government's good will in the field of religion, inspires Monsignor Tomasek with optimism for the future. "The spring has returned to Czechoslovakia," he declared in Rome, "if it lasts, I believe that the two ideologies, that of the State and that of the Church, can fruitfully co-exist. There may be difficulties, but these can be overcome. To my mind, the main thing that the "spring" has brought us so far, is that we are no longer a Church of Silence."

But while this optimistic tone seemed justified by all the hopeful reforms which were in progress in Czechoslovakia, dark clouds were gathering over the joyous country. The concept of a democratic Communism met with fierce disapproval in the neighbouring States whose conservative Communist governments were extremely shocked by the events in Czechoslovakia. The trouble was that these were the most important of Czechoslovakia's neighbours. For centuries had the Germans and the Russians exercised their influence and political control over Central Europe, usually in opposition to each other. The great misfortune of the Czech liberalization was that its implications antagonised equally both these external factors and highly alarmed a third, Poland.

By Germans I mean here the Eastern Germans in the so-called "Democratic" German Republic, and the wrath of the three States bordering on Czechoslovakia, East Germany, Russia and Poland, at her reforming policy is easily explained by their internal problems. Liberalisation is a

contagious novelty among the Communists of the second half of the twentieth century. The accumulation of deep-rooted grievances which had provoked it in Czechoslovakia exists also in all the other satellites of the Soviet Union as well as in the Union itself. The endless duration of the police State system (which Lenin had seen only as a transitory stage), the arrogance of the self-perpetuating oligarchy of the party's apparatus, the rigid censorship and denial of intellectual freedom, the failures of economic planning, are common to them all and increasingly resented. Therefore, all the three strictly totalitarian neighbours of Czechoslovakia felt utterly threatened by the developments in Prague. If the Czechs could achieve liberalisation by overthrowing the hated Novotny government, why could not the East Germans, Poles and, perhaps, even the Russians do the same?

To this factor of internal danger another was added which has its origin in international affairs: in that complex problem of post-war politics known as the re-unification of Germany. The Russians and the Poles are uncompromisingly against any re-unification of Germany in one single State. And so is, of course, the régime of Walter Ulbricht, the Communist leader in East Germany. The transformation of the former Soviet zone of occupation into the East German Communist State had been, under Stalin, intended as the stepping stone to a later bolshevisation of the whole of Germany when a suitable occasion presented itself. The occasion did not come, though Stalin refused to sign a peace treaty with Germany and repeatedly tried to provoke crises in German affairs, especially with his blockade of West Berlin in 1948/49. To-day the West German Federal Republic has grown more consolidated, stronger and wealthier than the eastern one and the hope of extending Communism to the whole of the pre-war German Reich can be relegated to the realm of wishful thinking. Russia

and her allies have settled now for two Germanys and their effort is concentrated on getting the eastern one recognised internationally as one of the two German states, and on keeping it within the bondage boundary of the Iron Curtain. This is by no means an easy task, considering the immense difference between the free and prosperous life in the democracy of the Western Republic and the drab servitude in the East. Can their unequal co-existence last forever without erupting, one day, in a rebellious attempt of the East Germans at an approach to Bonn, opening the way for the re-unification? Nothing would better serve such a potentiality than the spreading of the Czech liberalism into the neighbouring countries. Under these circumstances, the Ulbricht régime can safely be classified as the most vulnerable, the most reactionary and the most morbid among Moscow's accomplices in the conspiracy against Czechoslovakia.

It has, however, faithful allies in Poland and Russia. The Poles suffer in regard to Germany from a psychological complex of uneasiness, understandable when one realises the extent of former German territories they annexed and resettled (as the Czechs had done in the Sudetenland) after the war without any peace treaty. Their anxiety about an outbreak of German "revanchism" in the future, adroitly fed by Russia, forms a solid link between Moscow, Warsaw and Pankow (the suburb of Berlin which is the capital of East Germany), cementing their tripartite block with mutual solidarity of interest and fear. It was, therefore, for many interconnected reasons, imperative in the fields of both internal and external policy, that the trio, Brezhnev, Gomulka and Ulbricht—with the co-operation of a half-reluctant Hungary and a servile Bulgaria—prepared in dire secrecy the perfidious attack against the Czechs, launched in the night of 21 August, 1968.

The invasion did not produce the effects they expected. No Czech stalinists stood by

to welcome them, the Dubcek team was not swept away by angry partisans, eager to return to the fold of orthodoxy, and they ran against the wall of an all-national front of the Czechs and Slovaks, more united than ever in defiance to the brutal onslaught on their long-cherished hopes for a brighter future. There followed, however, awkward negotiations and now it looks as if the bullying potential of a world super-power should prevail in the end against the gallant resistance of the unfortunate victim, counting a mere 15,000,000 souls and faced on all sides with avowed enemies. But be this as it may, the nocturnal cloak-and-dagger assault of their armies on their own ally has opened a dramatic chapter in international affairs which will undoubtedly weigh heavily on the evolution of European politics in the remaining decades of the twentieth century. Its final results may be unpredictable. In three aspects, however, the crisis of 21 August may be evaluated now by pointing to three conclusions which do not run a great risk of being premature or disavowed by further developments: it has confirmed a progressive disintegration; it has established a precedent; and it has marked a period in the application of a political system which has dominated the relations between East and West for the past thirty years, since the end of the last war.

As for the first point, the Czech crisis has shown that the Communist society is definitely moving into the era where the deep disillusionment and long-repeated lies can lead to a collective defection of a ruling Communist party, supported by a vast majority of the nation over which it rules, from the traditional type of Communist marxism. This has happened before, in Yugoslavia, China and Albania, but in the case of Czechoslovakia it has much wider repercussions. The confirmation of the centrifugal tendency is unmistakably inherent not only in the Czech effort of emancipation from the Russian tutelage

but also in the reaction of the other Communist parties, especially those of western Europe. Apart from the five aggressors of the Warsaw pact, practically all the Communist parties of the world condemned the attack against Czechoslovakia and the rôle played in it by Russia. Some did it more emphatically than the others, but the general effect was overwhelmingly anti-Russian. As a spokesman for many, the French ideologist of marxist-leninism and member of the politbureau of the French Communist party, Roger Garaudy (well-known as one of the organisers of the dialogue between Communists and Christians on the possibilities of their *rapprochement*, held at Mariánské Lázně in Czechoslovakia two years ago), did not hesitate to describe publicly the invasion of Czechoslovakia as a "crime". In these circumstances, the world congress of the Communist parties which was to reinforce the Kremlin's leadership over them and had been in difficult preparation for several years, had to be postponed again. Not only are the Communist parties recalcitrant to any reinforcement of the Kremlin's leadership over them but some are in favour of convoking instead of the Moscow congress an anti-Moscow one, which would group the non-conformists and which is sponsored particularly by the oldest of the non-conformists, President Tito of Yugoslavia. If this happens, the alienation of the western Communist parties in France, Italy, Scandinavia and elsewhere from the five eastern ones, those which took part in the invasion of Czechoslovakia, may become irrevocable. It may result in a disruption of the Communist movement all over the world and its split into an eastern and a western brand, in addition to the Chinese one.

That is one of the aspects of the Czech crisis, reflecting the ramifications of its international significance. Another is that the invasion and subsequent occupation of Czechoslovakia has set up a far-reaching

precedent, the meaning of which the Russian Communists were not slow to elucidate for anyone who might be in doubt about it.

"The sovereignty of any single member of the socialist countries" wrote their official organ, *Pravda*, in an authoritative statement during the Czechoslovak crisis, "can not be opposed to the common interests of the whole sphere of socialism or to those of the global revolutionary movement". On this Leonid Brezhnev, secretary-general of the Russian Communist party, elaborated a few weeks later in no less categorical terms. Speaking in Warsaw, at the congress of the Polish Communist party held in November 1968, he said: "When the internal and external forces hostile to socialism seek to turn back the development of any socialist country to restore the capitalist order, when a threat emerges to the cause of socialism in that country, a threat to the security of the Socialist Commonwealth as a whole, this is no longer a matter only of the country in question, but it is also a common problem, a matter of concern for all socialist countries. Such an action as military aid to a fraternal country to thwart the threat to the socialist order is an extraordinary, a last resort measure. It can be caused only by the direct actions of the enemies of socialism inside the country and beyond its frontiers—actions which create a threat to the common interests of the socialist camp."

These staggering declarations have made of what seemed to be an isolated case, whipped up by the interplay of inflammatory factors to extraordinary proportions, the first application of a well-defined system. What was meted out to the Czechs is to be a standard treatment of all deviationist Communist parties in the future. Without waiting for the re-assertion of its leadership over all the Communist parties which it still hopes to achieve at the contemplated congress, the party of the Soviet Union has usurped the authority to determine what their common interests are and to take

coercive measures against anybody who would, in its view, offend against them. In other words, the masters of the Kremlin, together with their vassals of the Warsaw pact, proclaimed themselves entitled to crush any Communist party which might engage in a democratising process similar to that of the Czechs. In this, they are ready to disregard anybody's sovereign rights and, indeed, all rules of international law concerning sovereignty, which include the Charter of the United Nations and other solemn international engagements, many of which had been set up on their own initiative.¹ To forestall the protests of those who are to be "aided" by the Soviet Union against the capitalist "miscreants", a commentary of *Pravda* published a tart repudiation of the arguments which they might put forward on the ground of their sovereignty. The rules of the class struggle, it said, are above any law and can not be measured by the yardstick of the "bourgeois" legal norms. Consequently, the rules of class struggle, which the masters of the Kremlin make themselves, are superior—according to them—to all international law. Even Adolf Hitler in his hey-day did not show so blatantly his contempt for the rule of law and for a civilised order in the world as Leonid Brezhnev and his associates have done in 1968.

The Brezhnev doctrine is evidently the Kremlin's answer to the current centrifugal trend in the Communist society. But how effective can the self-appointed triple rôle of the Soviet Union as policeman, judge and executioner really be to quell the trend and to reverse the march of time back from Stalin's age?

The first use of the doctrine may have brought satisfaction to its expounders, though the final accounts still remain to be calculated. There is little doubt, however, that the smoothness of the military action in the night of 21 August must largely be attributed to exceptional conditions which are not likely to repeat themselves: the

preceding manoeuvres of the troops of the Warsaw pact in and around Czechoslovakia, which obviously prepared the ground for the subsequent invasion; the deep secrecy about it that its perpetrators were able to maintain; the unpreparedness of the Czechs owing to their disbelief that it could really happen; their geographical position in which they could be encircled from all sides; and—last but not least—the good roads all over the country which facilitated an easy deployment of armoured divisions. Where would the Soviets find, next time, such ideal conditions? Hardly in Rumania, and certainly not in Yugoslavia, where Marshal Tito has repeatedly assured the world that they would be met with an all-out resistance by force of arms. The less so in far-away countries like Cuba whose régime has lately also manifested a tendency to deviation, though not of a liberalising nature.

If, therefore, Brezhnev's teaching that what has once become Communist must forever remain Communist (and Moscovite Communist at that) has a chance to assert itself, it is in the compact sphere of their satellites that the Soviets had allotted to themselves in Eastern and Central Europe after the second world war. But, even there, can the phrase "for ever" with all its implications of a protracted confrontation between tanks and ideas be taken seriously? Here we can consult history, for the pretension of Leonid Brezhnev to halt the advance of human progress is not the first in the annals of mankind.

There was a time in European history, not long ago, when another group of reactionary powers was striving to hold back the evolution of humanity, also by refusing to other States the right to liberalise their political institutions. The period was between 1815 and 1848, and the group of reactionary powers was called the Holy Alliance. They were "Holy" only in their self-invented name deriving from a misuse of Christian phrasology in the treaty which brought their alliance into existence. Their

leaders were, not surprisingly, Russia and Prussia, two countries in which the predecessors of Brezhnev and Ulbricht then reigned, with the addition of Austria. The task they had undertaken was to keep Europe under the rule of absolutist monarchs, whose system of government the French revolution of 1789 had challenged in the name of liberalism, civic freedoms and democracy. They did, indeed, proceed in exactly the same way as the five powers of the Warsaw pact in the case of Czechoslovakia. When a liberal rebellion broke out in one of the European countries subjected to the police régime of an absolutist king, and the king's means of repression were inadequate to cope with it (as those of Antonin Novotny proved to be in 1967), he could make an appeal for help to the Holy Alliance. The leaders of the alliance then took council and organised an expedition of their own troops to the insurgent country to assist the prince in distress. They actually put down a few revolutions in this way and restored some tyrannical kings to their thrones.

But the march of time worked against them. They were incapable of preventing the liberalisation of France after her revolution of 1830, or that of Belgium, separated from Holland, or that of the whole of Latin America which emancipated itself from the despotic rule of the Spanish king in the same period. In the rest of the European continent the liberal movement went underground and ultimately exploded all over Central Europe in the great revolutionary year of 1848. In that year the organisation of the Holy Alliance broke down for good and, significantly, its last manifestation was a matter of its principal protagonists helping each other: it was the expedition of the army of the Russian czar, who was the main pillar of the Holy Alliance, to Hungary to quell the revolution of the Hungarian republicans against the emperor of Austria, another pillar of

the Alliance. Thereafter, the Holy Alliance disappeared into the background of history, never to be heard of again. This accounts for thirty-three years of its historical performance (from 1815 to 1848) which, of necessity, raises the question: if in the nineteenth century, where the pace of social and political developments was notoriously slower than in the twentieth, the Holy Alliance could be disposed of within the span of one generation, how long can the performance of the present Unholy Alliance last?

Finally, there is a third aspect of the Czech crisis which has lately been much under international scrutiny and discussion, without affording, however, more than speculative conclusions. It concerns the top-level relations between East and West. The cold war, whose resumption is generally heralded as a consequence of the occupation of Czechoslovakia, is in the first place a contest between the Soviet Union and the United States of America. A logical question was, therefore, on the lips of millions of people during the months of tension which preceded and followed the invasion: why did the Americans not support more actively the liberals of Prague? There was no objective limit to the amount of their support, moral or otherwise, as they were also neighbours of the Czechs in the sense that they had a common border with Czechoslovakia in West Germany, where their troops are garrisoned within the framework of the N.A.T.O. forces; and that border was not yet guarded by Russian soldiers on the Czech side. Apart from verbal encouragement they did nothing and made it clear, rather crudely, that they were not going to do anything. This could not but provoke a great deal of disappointment in the public opinion of the democratic countries and an animated debate flared up on the theme: is the world really so divided by secret Russo-American undertakings into two spheres of influence, respecting each other,

that the leaders of the United States can watch impassively the strangulation of a nation which aspires to nothing more than their own ideals of freedom and democracy?

It was an interesting by-product of the Czech tragedy to learn from a heated polemic in which newspapers and governments were involved, that there is no hard and fast bilateral agreement of that nature, binding on the two super-powers. It had been widely believed that secret arrangements to the effect of splitting the world into zones of exclusive influence had been concluded between President Roosevelt and Marshal Stalin at the end of the Second World War, at the conferences of Tcheran and Yalta. The American government now denies their existence which places another puzzle before their critics: why then, if there is no written pact about spheres of influence, mutually guaranteed, did the Americans not help more efficiently the most western—both geographically and culturally—of the nations jailed behind the bars of the Iron Curtain to escape from the grips of the Soviet Union and her Warsaw pact henchmen?

The reason is doubtless to be sought in a unilateral restriction which the governments of the United States have put on their own foreign policy since the early stages of the Stalin's cold war and which is known as the doctrine of containment. It teaches that the Communist social order and governmental system, as well as the organisation of the Soviet block, contain enough self-destructive elements which will, sooner or later, cause its ruin and disintegration from inside. From this belief the doctrine is deduced that the world can be spared a third world war if the United States does not provoke any violent conflict with Russia and just waits for its decline and fall while "containing" Communism, i.e. by preventing it from expanding to other countries than those where it succeeded in establishing itself immediately after the last war.

This doctrine, originating at the time of President Truman, has been consistently applied by his successors and has, on the whole, given satisfactory results; it worked in favour of the West in Iran, in the Greek civil war, in the Berlin blockade, in Korea, in Malaya, and elsewhere. It may also be argued that the principle of containment contributed to the defection of Yugoslavia from the Soviet camp and to the gradual estrangement between Moscow and Rumania. In the case of Czechoslovakia, however, a new stage in its application has been reached. Here the Soviets, realising that they are steadily losing authority in their sphere of influence, hit out using their own troops, which they had never done before. And they have made it clear that this was a procedure to be applied again in any other similar situation where and when they would deem it necessary. What influence will this have on the American containment doctrine?

In the Czech drama it had none. Czechoslovakia does belong to the Kremlin's sphere of influence, but in a somewhat exceptional way. She has become, by the *coup d'état* of February 1948, the last conquest of Communism to join the orbit of Moscow's obedience, in defiance of the American principle of containment—already operative at that time—which purported to prevent any new conquests of the Communists. Admittedly, there was not much point then in trying to help the democratic Czechs as they were unable to help themselves and succumbed to Gotwald and his Workers' Militia without any serious resistance. But now the situation is different.

The world has rarely seen so much unanimity in condemning the act of the five aggressors of the Warsaw pact, and nobody can deny that the Czechs have manifested courage, firmness, and fighting spirit in defending their liberalising reforms. Neither the United States, however, nor the United Nations, nor anyone else in a

position of political or legal authority has given them any earnest support to enforce the withdrawal of foreign armies from their territory, though they came there in flagrant disregard of international law. Many questions, all of great importance for the future of Europe and of the world, arise out of this failure.

Will the upholders of the containment theory accept without demur the new Holy Alliance and remain only passive observers—though pretending to be scandalised—of its further activities? Will they do so if an armed conflict breaks out between Communist countries, as it undoubtedly would if the Kremlin tries to re-subjugate Yugoslavia? Will they do so if the dissatisfied nations in Central Europe revolt collectively, in a general rising like that of 1848, to shake off the oppression of the tyrants? Does the doctrine of containment imply for the United States an idle waiting for a complete and final decomposition of Communism from within, even at a stage which shows—as the developments in Czechoslovakia did—that the Communist order is already in an advanced state of disintegration? Has not the point been attained where the doctrine of containment calls for re-assessment?

While waiting to know the answers to these questions, Czechoslovakia celebrated in the presence of Soviet tanks, on 28 October, 1968, the fiftieth anniversary of her birth in 1918, at the close of the first World War. They were not fifty years of felicity and joy. On the contrary, exactly half of them—twenty five years—was spent under the yoke of foreign totalitarians, the worst of their time: five years of nazi occupation under Adolf Hitler and Reinhard Heydrich, and twenty years of Communist domination under Stalin and his successors. A political Prometheus of modern Europe, tied to the rock of her unfortunate position at the crossroads of the continent, exposed to periodical attacks of the lurking powers of prey, Czecho-

slovakia has tried hard to live up to the ideals of liberty and human dignity which are part of her national heritage. Whenever she was free to manage her own affairs without foreign interference, she stood in the forefront of those who were labouring to build up a safe, just, and progressive world. And yet, when the critical moments in her existence came, when she was collapsing in unequal show-downs with the leading bullies of Europe, no succour ever arrived to rescue her from their brutal clutches. Her allies, her friends and sympathisers, including the highest organs

of the community of nations charged with the guardianship of international peace and security—the League of Nations in 1938 and the United Nations' Organisation in 1968—have done no more for her than to shed tears over her tragic destiny. Could this engender a feeling of guilt in the western democracies and move them to back the Czechs with acts, instead of words, when they try again to get rid of the shackles with which they are now being re-chained?

For they can be trusted. Sooner or later, they will try again.

1. Among the provisions laying down the basic aims of the United Nations' Organisation and the pledges of its members, Article 2 of the Charter states: "All members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or from actions in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations."

In order to strengthen the engagements entered into in the Charter, all the six invaders of Czechoslovakia (and Czechoslovakia herself) adhered, only a few months before their aggression, to the United Nations' International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights which, by Article 1, provides: "All peoples have the right of self-determination. By virtue of that right they freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development."

All the six aggressors of Czechoslovakia are members of the United Nations; the Soviet Union and Poland, as well as Czechoslovakia, were among its founding members at the conference of San Francisco in 1944.



IRISHMEN PROCLAIM THEIR
LAWFUL DEMOCRATIC RIGHTS
AND ORGANISE TO PROTECT
THEM IN 1919

The Declaration of
Irish Independence

OFFICIAL ENGLISH TRANSLATION

HISTORIC PRONOUNCEMENT OF
IRELAND'S FREEDOM FROM
ENGLISH RULE, MADE AT
THE FIRST MEETING OF
DÁIL EIREANN (IRELAND'S REPUBLICAN
PARLIAMENT)
IN THE MANSION HOUSE
DUBLIN ON TUESDAY
JANUARY 21ST 1919

Published by Fergus O'Connor, Dublin.

Cover of famous Document

DAIL ÉIREANN

1919

By

SEAMAS Ó RÍAIN

WHEN the European War ended in November, 1918, Mr. Lloyd George decided to have a general election. The Sinn Féin Organisation was hoping for this opportunity to test the feelings of the Irish electorate and decided to contest all the 105 seats. There was, however, a problem to be considered in eight Ulster constituencies. The Nationalist majority over Unionist was small and it was feared that if both *Sinn Féin* and Irish Party put up candidates the Unionists would probably win. The United Irish League or Irish Party had asked Cardinal Logue to intervene as conciliator in the matter between *Sinn Féin* and themselves and hence when an agreement was reached it was known as the Logue Pact.

The *Sinn Féin* Executive considered the matter and proposed that a plebiscite of the national voters in each constituency should be taken to decide whether a *Sinn Féin* or Irish Party candidate would be nominated. Eoin MacNeill was deputed to

discuss the matter with Cardinal Logue and John Dillon. When he returned and said he had agreed on the recommendation of the Cardinal to have four seats allotted to each Party, the Executive were very indignant but they felt they had to accept the *fait accompli*. The Executive also considered that the four seats allotted to *Sinn Féin* were the more Unionist of the eight and, in fact, they lost one of them—East Down.

The Election was held on 14 December, 1918. To facilitate the large number of voters who were still serving with the army, the British Government arranged to have ballot papers posted to them; the first time, I think, that postal voting was tried in these countries. Because of this delay the votes were not counted until 28 December.

Sinn Féin Headquarters were optimistic about their candidates' success. Before and immediately after 14 December, their forecast hovered around 70 seats. In fact they won 73. In the twenty-six counties (now

making up the Republic) *Sinn Féin* lost only five: two in Trinity College and one in Rathmines to Unionists, and one in both Waterford and East Donegal to the Irish Parliamentary Party (the last under the Logue Pact). In Ulster the Unionists took 23 seats; *Sinn Féin* 10—of which three were under the Logue Pact; Irish Party 5—four of them under the Logue Pact.¹

In its manifesto *Sinn Féin* stood for sovereign independence and an Irish Republic and asked for votes on this programme and nothing less.

They aimed at securing the establishment of that Republic:—

- (1) By withdrawing the Irish representatives from the British Parliament, and by denying the right and opposing the will of the British Government, or any foreign government, to legislate for Ireland.
- (2) By making use of any and every means available to render impotent the power of England to hold Ireland in subjection by military force or otherwise.

The first meeting of the *Sinn Féin* members was held in the Mansion House on 21 January, 1919. Although *Sinn Féin* won 73 seats the Party consisted of only 69 members because four of them, de Valera, Griffith, MacNeill and Mellows had each been elected for two constituencies, not an unknown phenomenon at that time. The normal procedure was that the successful candidate had to opt for one constituency and the other was then declared vacant and was filled through a by-election. In this case no candidate opted to sit in Westminster for either constituency. The British Government had no precedent to guide them and they either did not know how to act or maybe were not inclined to take any step that might entice 69 or 73 troublesome members in

to swell the opposition. Only twenty-eight of the elected members attended the first meeting. There were thirty-seven in jail. The rest were in America on national work or absent for personal reasons. Cathal Brugha was elected Chairman, or *Ceann Comhairle* and a provisional constitution was adopted.

The first meeting of the Dail was open to the Press and we dealt in particular with statements on national status and national aspirations. The *Declaration of Independence* was approved. To quote an extract:

“Whereas the Irish Republic was proclaimed in Dublin on Easter Monday, 1916, by the Irish Republican Army on behalf of the Irish people . . . and the Irish electorate has in the General Election of December, 1918, seized the first occasion to declare by an overwhelming majority its firm allegiance to the Irish Republic . . . we, the elected representatives . . . ratify the establishment of the Irish Republic and pledge ourselves and our people to make this declaration effective by every means at our command”.

The democratic programme was approved including:

“It shall be the first duty of the Government of the Republic to make provision for the physical, mental and spiritual well-being of the children, to secure that no child shall suffer hunger or cold from lack of food or clothing or shelter, but that all shall be provided with the means and facilities requisite for their proper education and training as citizens of a free and Gaelic Ireland”.

A message to the free nations of the world said *inter alia*:

“Ireland is one of the most ancient nations in Europe and she has preserved her national integrity, vigorous and intact,

through seven centuries of foreign oppression; she has never relinquished her national rights and throughout the long era of English usurpation she has in every generation definitely proclaimed her inalienable right of nationhood down to her last glorious resort to arms in 1916. . . . Ireland—resolutely and irrevocably determined at the dawn of the promised era of self-determination and liberty that she will suffer foreign domination no longer—calls upon every free nation to uphold her national claim to complete independence as an Irish Republic against the arrogant pretensions of England founded in fraud and sustained only by an overwhelming military occupation, and demands to be confronted publicly with England at the Congress of the Nations that the civilised world, having judged between English wrong and Irish right, may guarantee to Ireland its permanent support for the maintenance of her national independence”.

Cathal Brugha was chosen as *Príomh Aire*—referred to in English as President. At a meeting the following day he submitted the names of four Ministers for ratification: Eoin MacNeill for Finance, Michael Collins for Home Affairs, Count Plunkett for Foreign Affairs and Richard Mulcahy for Defence. Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh was elected Ceann Comhairle to replace Cathal Brugha.

At the first session our main business was to declare our independence to the world. Even in selecting a Government only the political posts were filled. We had not come round to economic or social problems but it was obvious that, if the Dail was to function as the Parliament of the country, living conditions generally would have to be considered. This would require more departments and more ministers and, above all, the necessary finance. At the meeting £2,000 was voted to defray any necessary

expenses—a measure of our resources at that time.

After two days' session the Dail adjourned and left the Ministers to carry on. There was no further meeting until 1 April.

In the meantime Mr. de Valera had escaped and other members had been released from prison. At this meeting Cathal Brugha resigned and Éamon de Valera was elected *Príomh Aire* or President and on the following day he nominated his Ministers: Arthur Griffith for Home Affairs, Cathal Brugha for Defence, Count Plunkett for Foreign Affairs, Countess Markievicz for Labour, Eoin MacNeill for Industries, Michael Collins for Finance, William Cosgrave for Local Government. As heads of Departments: Laurence Ginnell for Propaganda and Robert Barton for Agriculture, and, the next day Ernest Blythe was appointed director of Industry and Commerce. The issue of £250,000 in Republican Bonds was authorised.

On 10 April a public session was held and Mr. de Valera reported on the work of the Government. He had been asked what action the Government would take on the *Ways and Communications* bill which was before the British Parliament. He said: “The Director of Trade will as his especial duty examine, in co-operation with public bodies, how best to resist the English *Ways and Communications* bill. Ministers and Directors at the heads of other Departments—Labour, Industries, Agriculture, Local Government, will seek co-operation with all interested in these Departments. The Minister for Defence is, of course, in close association with the voluntary military forces which are the foundation of the National Army”.

The Government had now decided on looking for money on a more substantial scale and the President had made it plain that Ministers were expected to consult with people interested in their Department and take any desirable or necessary action. From a small Government appointed in

January to deal with political affairs, a larger Government had emerged which covered economic and social affairs as well.

We had two public sessions,—one on 11 April at which the Freedom of the Seas and the principles enunciated by President Wilson on world peace were debated, and another on 9 May, to welcome the American Commission on Irish Independence. The Commission consisted of Frank P. Walsh, formerly Chairman of the National War Labour Board; ex-Governor Edward F. Dunne and Michael J. Ryan. They had come to Europe to try to get the Peace Conference to give a hearing to the Irish Delegates. It would appear that the British authorities were not unduly worried about our public pronouncements but were very anxious to know what we were doing behind closed doors.

There were two important private sessions held on 17 and 18 June. President de Valera had gone to America but he had sent a letter to the Dail requesting ratification for his appointment of Art Ó Griobhtha as Deputy President during his absence.

It was proposed that a consular service should be approved—its financing not to exceed £10,000 per annum—to France, Switzerland, Spain and America. The establishment of a Land Bank was approved to facilitate the purchase of land by young men. The Dail decreed 1 November National Labour Day and authorised the appointment of a national director of forestry—£1,000 was voted for that year. For the development of fisheries £11,000 was voted.

The Dail authorised the appointment of a national commission of inquiry into the resources and industries of Ireland and the consideration of a national exhibition. £5,000 was voted to finance the Commission.

It was agreed to appoint consultative councils to each Department to assist the Minister. Members were asked what Departmental councils they would opt to join.

Details of the proposed issue of bonds were announced to the Dail. It was proposed to issue £250,000 for home subscription; 25% payable on application, 25% on 1 August and 50% on 1 November, interest at 5% payable half-yearly. Dividends would fall due at 2½% half-yearly but would not be payable until six months after evacuation by Britain and the international recognition of the Republic. Bonds would be redeemed within twenty years from the date of international recognition. Three trustees were appointed to receive and take care of all revenue: Éamon de Valera, The Most Reverend Michael Fogarty, D.D., bishop of Killaloe and James O'Mara, T.D.

At a private session on 19 August (41 present) a scheme for the establishment of National Arbitration Courts was approved, consisting of a supreme court, district courts and petty courts, civilian justices to take charge of the latter.

Reports from Departments were discussed and action approved on Fisheries, Foreign Affairs, Finance and Industry and Commerce. Darrel Figgis was appointed Secretary to the Commission of Inquiry on Resources and Industries. Alderman Tom Kelly was appointed Acting Minister for Labour to replace Madame Markievicz while in jail and the Dail authorised the establishment of conciliation machinery to deal with industrial disputes.

It was also agreed that an oath of allegiance to the Republic should be taken by members of the Dail and its officials, and by the Army. We did not know why an oath should be administered at this time as we were unaware that there had been a long battle in the Government and the Army on the question of control of the Army. From the beginning the President, Cathal Brugha, Minister for Defence, and other Ministers were very insistent on bringing the Irish Volunteers under the control of the Government and the Dail as a National Army. It was essential for the

Government to have an army at its disposal and it was most important for the Army to have the authority of the Government behind it.

The Army was then controlled by a Council elected from time to time by a convention of officers representing the brigades throughout the country. There was a general belief that the I. R. B. through their members exercised considerable influence at the conventions.

The I. R. B. professed a lack of confidence in the integrity of some of the Dail deputies. It was feared that if they were faced with a crisis they might abandon their trust and allow the sovereign Parliament of the Republic to be disestablished. They argued that if then the Volunteers were subject to the Dail they would have to obey and Ireland's cause would be lost.

Eventually it was agreed that the Volunteers would become the Army of the Republic and subject to the Dail on condition that every member of the Dail and of the Army would subscribe to an oath of allegiance to the Dail and the Republic.

At this meeting on 19 August Cathal Brugha proposed that a committee for the preservation of the Irish Language in the Irish-speaking districts be appointed and that £1,000 be appropriated for this purpose. In the subsequent discussion one proposed amendment called for a Minister to look after the Irish language and another advocated the appointment of a Minister for Education. The whole question was fully discussed and then postponed to give the Government an opportunity of considering it in detail and submitting their decision for ratification at another meeting.

The next meeting was held on 27 October. It was a private session. Since the last meeting the Dail had been declared illegal by the British Government, as had the *Sinn Féin* Organisation, the Gaelic League, *Cumann na mBan* and, of course, the Irish Volunteers. The Acting-President, Arthur Griffith, told us there was a strong

possibility of a raid from British forces and that certain members had been advised not to attend because they appeared to be unfit physically for long terms of imprisonment and others had been ordered to stay away because they were considered indispensable in the maintenance of the Dail. All those present subscribed to the Oath.

Apart from the British menace Griffith had an optimistic report to make. We were told that the world press was becoming more interested in Ireland. In the beginning only the leftist foreign press, glad to pillory England, paid any attention to this country but recently many papers on the right were both interested and friendly.

He reported that the President was conducting a very successful campaign in America and had no doubt about the success of the Loan. It may be of interest to mention here that later the Internal Loan was over-subscribed, reaching the figure of £379,000 and the American Loan came to approximately \$5,800,000.

Consuls had been appointed by the Government: Éamon Bulfin to Argentine, Leopold H. Kerney to France, Gerald O'Kelly to Switzerland, Donal Hales to Genoa and Diarmuid Fawsitt as Consul General to America.

The business of the session was completed without any interruption from the British side and we did not meet again until June, 1920.

The apparent inactivity of the Dail, however, was no indication of indifference on the part of the Government. We saw before long that the R.I.C. had ceased to carry on ordinary police duties. They had become very unpopular as they tended to devote all their time to the suppression of what they regarded as illegal activities. As they were ostracized by the great majority of the people, they had no contacts to help them in police work. They had been withdrawn from many rural barracks and brought into fortified barracks in the larger centres. This move was designed to

prevent the loss of their arms to the Volunteers, but it was not always successful as many of the newly fortified barracks were attacked and captured by the Volunteers who had now taken the Oath and had become the Army of Dail Éireann.

The Minister for Defence, Cathal Brugha, having complained that the Army were losing too much of their time on police work, the Minister for Home Affairs, Austin Stack, agreed to organise a police force for ordinary police duties and release the Army for the more important task of getting rid of the enemy.

Republican courts were beginning to function in the greater part of the country. Not only criminal cases but also civil actions were brought before these courts and verdicts were freely accepted.

The Dail Department of Local Government was gaining recognition from the Local Authorities. In fact it was being pressed to take over by some Local Authorities before it was quite ready to accept the responsibility. When the Local Elections were held in the first part of 1920 and the great majority of the Councils were controlled by *Sinn Féin*, the change over of allegiance from the British to the Irish Local Government Department was inevitable. The ordinary citizen saw less and less of British institutions and more and more of the Dail. He did, of course, see more of the British armed forces whom he now looked on as the enemy.

The year 1919 was, therefore, a year of great change. The people were quite satisfied with the first meeting of the Dail which dealt entirely with the fundamental questions of Independence. As time went on and the Government elected by the Dail established itself more and more as a real Government, people showed increased interest in that phase of the country's evolution and they admired, in particular, the ingenuity of the Government in outwitting the British establishment which had held sway for hundreds of years.

During all this time the demand of Ireland for self-determination was sedulously pursued. The Dail, early in 1919, appointed de Valera, Griffith and Plunkett to represent Ireland at the Peace Conference and the Government sent Seán T. Ó Ceallaigh and George Gavan Duffy to Paris to try to secure a hearing for our delegates. Doctor Patrick McCarton was deputed to bring Ireland's case before the American Government and people. The Friends of Irish Freedom Organisation held a well attended convention of delegates in Philadelphia in February, 1919, where they appointed three representatives to go to Paris to try to secure a hearing at the Peace Conference for Ireland's envoys. They also pledged themselves to raise a million dollars within twelve months as a Victory Fund for Ireland's cause. They appealed to President Wilson to support Ireland's right to self-determination and to secure for the elected delegates from her Constituent Assembly to the Peace Conference the same status and recognition which had been accorded to those other small nations. When a delegation from the Convention called on President Wilson and presented the resolution to him, he said he was in complete accord with Ireland's aspirations but he would have to use his own discretion on methods which seemed best to him.

At this time also the American Congress passed a resolution, by 261 votes to 41, that the Peace Conference in Paris should favourably consider the claims of Ireland to self-determination.

The International Labour Conference meeting in Amsterdam in April demanded:

"That the principle of peace and absolute self-determination shall be applied immediately in the case of Ireland".

In June the American Senate passed a resolution:—

"That the Senate of the United States

earnestly requests the American Peace Commission at Versailles to endeavour to secure for Éamon de Valera, Arthur Griffith and George Nobel Count Plunkett, a hearing before the Peace Conference in order that they may present the case of Ireland”.

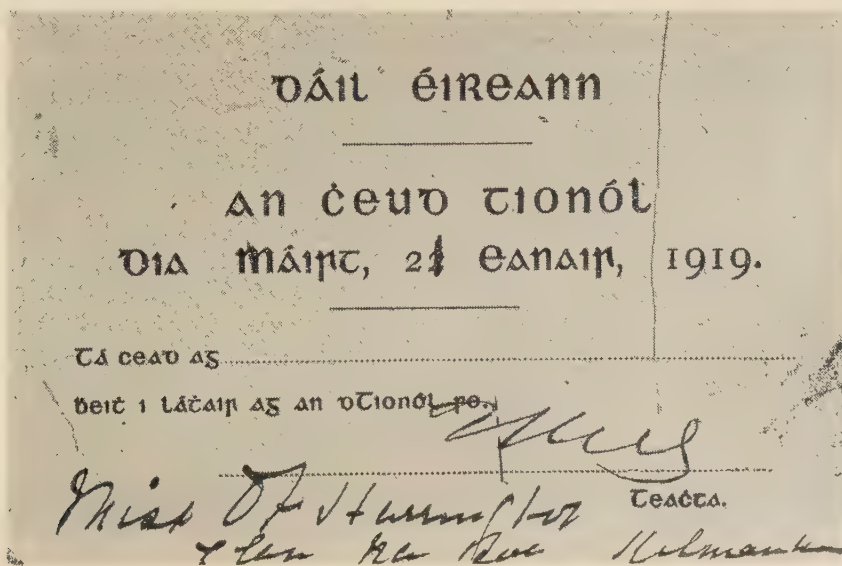
And further, the Senate expressed its sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a government of their own choice. This resolution was passed with only one dissident.

All hope of having Ireland's case considered by the Peace Conference faded however when Mr. Frank P. Walsh succeeded in having an interview with President Wilson. The President told him that he was powerless in the matter because the four big powers had initially agreed that no claim could be considered except with the approval of each of the big powers. On this issue amongst others Wilson had been outwitted by Lloyd George.

After this the efforts of de Valera and his team in America were directed towards the deletion of *Article Ten* from the proposed constitution of the League of Nations. This *Article* would pledge all nations who joined to guarantee the

territorial integrity of each member. Ireland would then have to fight not only the British Empire for her independence but also every other nation who joined the League because at that time Ireland was part of British territory. In the end America did not join the League, due to some extent of the influence of Irish Americans, but especially to a powerful section of the population who were opposed to meddling in European affairs.

Apart from Dail meetings it was a busy life for us—the back-benchers of the Party. The *Sinn Féin* Organisation had to be maintained through parish clubs or *cumainn*. On them depended the establishment of the Arbitration Courts and the success of the National Loan as well as the preparation for the Local Elections due to take place early in 1920. Most of us were also involved in the organisation and training of the I.R.A. and many of us were in the Gaelic League. We were not permitted by the British authorities to keep motor cars. We could hire them or travel by horse or bicycle. We had very few nights and hardly any Sunday free to spend at home. Looking back however we were reasonably satisfied with the national progress for 1919 and looked forward with hope and confidence to 1920.



Important Letter of 1919

Gloucester Prison
January 23rd, 1919

A Cairde,

I may be able to get a message out to-day. These are a few hurried suggestions—they are only suggestions for consideration by the Dail. Shut off here it is not possible to do more than guess at some aspects of the situation.

What has been done and what the Dail is doing is splendid. Keep the country calm, disciplined and dignified. Let it not be provoked by the Castle gang. They have no policy and when their provocation tactics fail they will jail.

While the matter of the release of the prisoners should be kept up, let it occupy only a subsidiary place to the Peace Conference. Concentrate on that. Our imprisonment is only an incident and should not be given a disproportionate importance.

The Dail should not commit itself to any scheme which it does not feel can be worked out with present resources, but it should keep well before the people the fact that the reason why great schemes which commend themselves to the Nation cannot be worked at present is the existence of English Government in Ireland.

It would not be advisable either to go into the details of an Irish Constitution at present; just keep the straight question of Irish Independence first. The first thing first.

We are all well here, we are expecting in the next few hours the arrival of the Usk prisoners who are being transferred here—seventeen in number.

Sláinte.

Arthur Griffith.

THE Dail Eireann is admirable. The intention to secure con— (control?) of the local bodies is most important. Besides the County Council Borough and Urban Rural Councils the Harbour Boards should be captured. The franchise for these boards differs from the Local Government franchise, but with organisation the Ports and Docks Board in Dublin and similar bodies should be won. The powers of these bodies vary, but are in all cases important. See the Dublin Port and Docks Board Act etc., and full return of goods imported and exported from Ireland can be probably made available through securing these Boards. Harbour dues can be used to favour the import of necessary raw material rather than competing manufactured goods and to encourage direct trade between Ireland and continental countries, the United States of America, etc.

Through the capture of the County Councils, Councils of Agriculture which really has power largely to dominate and direct the Department of Agriculture can be secured for Sinn Fein. This is a matter of vast importance to the agriculture, fisheries, and industries of the country.

The powers of the County Council in connection with afforestation, libraries, gymnasiums (see Museum and Libraries Act etc.) have been little used. If used to the full they would be productive of much benefit to the industries, agriculture and physical and mental education of the people. Some of the lawyers, Duggan and Gavan Duffy, for instance, with H. Dixon and some of our Borough and County Councillors like Alderman Kelly, S. T. O'Kelly, the Mayor of Limerick, T. P. McKenna, V. C. of the General County Council might form a committee to examine the Act of 1898, and amending supplementary and kindred Acts and report in full on the County Councils' powers and suggest how they could be best exercised. There are many it might be advisable to have with them in the purpose, for instance, D. C.

Rushe, Secretary of Monaghan County Council.

The application and if necessary the revision of the National Civil Service scheme put forward by Sinn Fein, eight or nine years ago, should be considered. In connection with this, H. Mangan, City Accountant of Dublin, who had much to do with its drafting might be consulted or the Christian Brothers to whom it was submitted at the time and who were strongly in its favour.

As to the Poor Law, the Sinn Fein Poor Law scheme of several years ago should be reconsidered. Mrs. Power and others intimately associated with Poor Law working should know all about it. The powers under the Poor Law Acts are far-reaching, and the existing workhouse system can be abolished within the four corners of these Acts and a far better and more humane system, based on the extension of outdoor relief and aid, and the provision of hostels and houses for the aged and infirm in place of the workhouse introduced. The Scottish Poor Law system gives headlines in this respect. If a reform scheme that can be worked under the Acts is decided upon a Congress of the delegates of the Poor Law might be summoned, and it presented to them for their adoption. If they unreasonably refuse to adopt it with such amendments as the necessity of the case might suggest to them the Poor Law elections should be fought on the programme and it should be carried into effect by the new boards.

As to the housing question in Dublin, Alderman Tom Kelly and Sean T. O'Kelly and others who have been interested in it, might draw out schemes. See the one published in Sinn Fein 1906 or 1907, and which the Sinn Fein members of the Corporation tried to get put into force, and consider whether it might not be made either in whole or in part applicable. There is a most important matter in this connection. The Irish Quit and Crown Rents have been embezzled for nearly one hundred

years by England, and used for the beautification of the English metropolis. It is owing to this that Dublin housing for the poor is in such a condition. For these monies had been largely used by the Irish Parliament and had been used to provide Dublin with fine streets and sweep away the slums etc. More than sixty years ago the Dublin Corporation drew up a scheme for the sweeping away of the Dublin slums, and their replacement by great streets and avenues. This scheme drawn up by engineers and architects of the Corporation was unanimously adopted by the Dublin Corporation then largely Conservative. The Corporation claimed from the English Government of the day the money due to Ireland for The Quit and Crown rents for this purpose. The Government refused to give it back. This is the cause of the present state of affairs.

The people should know this. The world should know this, for England in her propaganda pointed to the Dublin slums as proof of Irish incapacity and corruption. The tables should be turned on her. The Dublin Corporation at the time in protest against the action of the Government issued a pamphlet on the subject which was printed by Fowler of Crow Street, Dublin. I had a copy in Irish I have lost. The date was about 1861. It might have been, though I don't think so, earlier, it might have been a little later but Sean T. should be able to get it, not the pamphlet, the plans and the account of the Corporation meetings and dealings with them and adopting them from the Corporation records. The whole matter should be made public again. The Corporation again should put this matter forward claiming that stolen money, and the Dail, if considered well, deal with the matter in the way of showing that Dublin slumdom is the creation of English robbery.

Men concerned with Irish fisheries, like Dee of Dungarvan, should be consulted as to the best method of encouragement and revival. Co-operation might be useful here.

See a Series of Articles on the Irish Fisheries in Sinn Fein about 1908 or 1909. Examine the powers of the Department which can be controlled through the Council of Agriculture by the County Councillors. See also the annual reports of the Scottish Fisheries. They are most valuable.

Financially, for Irish development such for instance as securing land for the landless young men, helping the Fisheries etc., it is necessary to secure the co-operation of a Bank. The National or the Munster and Leinster would be the best. The inducement that would have for them is in the power of the County Councils etc. If we control these bodies we can offer the Bank which agrees to help in this matter the whole banking of the public funds passing through the hands of the Committee. O'Mara and others of the business men with Robins of Westmeath and bank managers favourable to us ought discuss the matter.

However desirable any scheme should be of improvement for the country, the Dail should only apply what it is in its power at present to apply. What it would desire to do should be clearly indicated and what Ireland could do if it had the power of self-government explained to the people, England being thus clearly shown as the obstacle and enemy to Irish progress, but a scheme as put into operation must be a scheme within the power at our disposal.

The difficulties of getting from Ireland to the Continent are very great. But at the first opportunity on the resumption of communications, efforts should be made by Sinn Fein businessmen to secure that agencies for German products, hitherto held exclusively in England and worth millions to the businessmen of that country, should to an extent be held in Ireland. See Moylett of Ballina especially on this matter.

The matter of arbitration courts is an important one. They can be made of vast service and add considerably to the authority of the Dail. Lawyers like Duggan etc., can explain the working of the

Arbitration Act under which these Courts have power. There are courts, I believe, in Kilkenny and Cavan. The idea should be copied and the courts carefully constituted and with several guiding rules established after an investigation of the present working ones. There might be some kind of an Appeal Court established in conjunction with them, but while these Courts are most important the whole scheme of Arbitration Courts should be carefully thought out and prepared.

An official document from the Dail, contrasting Ireland, Czechoslovakia and Poland might be used, showing how while under Austrian and Russian rule these two countries increased in population and wealth. This not to excuse Austrian or Russian rule in these two countries but to make it clear to the world that the case of Ireland against England surpasses by far the case of any other country in Europe against foreign domination. Several men might perhaps be needed to draw this up, but a reliable statistician is essential. F. E. O'Byrne and T. Galvin would be useful men in the latter respect.

In any discussion regarding Ulster, it should be always pointed out that *Ulster* prosperity is fictitious. Show the continued decline of her population since 1845 especially in the Protestant counties year by year. Antrim, Down, Derry and Armagh decline every year. See Census and Registrar General's figures. Contrast the decline in these counties with the *increase* in the others which are industrial.

Above all concentrate on the Peace Conference. If there is no way of getting substitutes from Ireland, substitutes from the U.S.A. should be appointed. This should be done even in addition to substitutes from Ireland, provided men from America of high standing could be secured. The passport barrier will be worked very probably by Clemenceau for the French, and against Irishmen and non-naturalised Irish Americans. Therefore American

citizens should be chosen. They should not be confined to any one Irish or American party. If Judge Goff, Cardinal O'Connell, two Senators,—one a Democratic and the other a Republican—could be got together with Diarmuid Lynch and MacCartan and Mellows, if he is an American citizen, it would make a delegation impossible to keep from being heard at the Conference. If two Senators, one a Democrat and one a Republican, could not be got, one Senator and one Congressman representing two different American parties, or failing a Senator, two Congress men of different parties should be secured. Every effort should be made to get Cardinal O'Connell and a messenger sent to America about the Delegation. If arranged, Dail could formally ask them to proceed to the Congress in view of the fact that the appointed delegates were prevented by imprisonment and force from so doing.

Efforts should be made to secure the sympathy of the small S. American States which are at the Peace Conference. Mrs. Seamus MacManus, who is grand-daughter of the Liberator of Venezuela in the United States of America, might be able to see the Nicaragua, Guatamala, etc., presidents.

In sending out the address to the nations there ought to be a covering letter to each separate state or nation recalling Ireland's association with it. Thus in the case of the S. American States Bolivar's message of thanks to the Irish for liberating them should be recalled. Have the history of the Irish Legions under Devereux and others recalled and stress laid on O'Higgins of Chile, Admiral Brown of Argentina etc. (See Brown's letter to O'Connell about 1843—Proceedings of Repeal Asscn.).

Similarly the association of Ireland with the European countries should be individually dealt with. Serbia's first organiser and Leader against Turkey 1810 was Colonel O'Rourke. Italy and Germany, Belgium, Austria—(see association of missionaries, soldiers and teachers)—and

Portugal (look up O Dunn, Premier in eighteenth century). Remind Liberia and Haïta that Ireland is the only European country that never engaged in the Negro slave trade. Remind Bohemia, Poland, Roumania and Bulgaria of the similarity of our struggles.

Consuls to be sent abroad as soon as practicable, probably not practicable now but existing men in other countries might be utilised. Gerald O'Loughlin in Denmark may be thoroughly relied upon. William Dunne in Norway equally able and reliable. O'Loughlin will have his address. He is, I think, working the Norwegian Press at present. There is a very able Sinn Féiner of high standing in Brazil. If he could be communicated with from the United States, it would be useful. He has kept "O Muada" an important paper there, sympathetic. Sean T. may have his address (as to French politicians, George Barry and Denys Cochin more or less Royalists and Catholic leaders are powerful, especially the latter, and the former is very sympathetic. Lucien Mille-roye, the Nationalist, is a fairly strong man and sympathetic. See Victor Collins, Stephen McKenna, etc., about French politicians (see them separately.) The ecclesiastics should know much about D. Cochin. See Mgr. O'Dogherty of Omagh about this.

I see Gompers is apparently to face a different kind of international labour Congress to the Socialists. If so, Ireland's case should be urged there equally. Gompers would probably have more influence with Wilson than the others. If Ireland is not officially represented by Trades Unions at it, some Sinn Féin trades (branch) with, if possible, a member of the Dail should go there to state the case. If this is impracticable an official statement from Ireland should be sent to it.

It is a mistake in tactics to suggest that Wilson is not sincere. If he is not, the suggestion will not help Ireland, and if he be, it will dishearten him. Our attitude

should be that Wilson is a sincere man striving to give effect to his programme of freedom for all nations and struggling against all the forces of tyranny, imperialism and lusty world power which are seeking to dominate the Peace Conference. That Ireland therefore supports him heartily and seeks to strengthen his hands. This is the politic and I believe the true course. The English propaganda will twist any slighting phrase that may be used of Wilson in Ireland to make Ireland appear to America and to himself to be hostile to him. Continue to strengthen his hands until he—if he ever does—yields up his own programme. Up to the present he has stood up to it, and his position is one of serious difficulties.

Mobilise the poets. Let them address Wilson, and let them remind him in their best verse that he has the opportunity and the duty of giving the world true peace and freedom. Let them exhort him to stand firm and win a greater victory for man than any that has been won for centuries. Let them remind him that the peoples look to him as to the man of hope, that all his ideals fail if Ireland is permitted to remain enclosed. Starkey, Stephens should do much to help Ireland now by that genius. Perhaps Yeats would use his muse for Ireland now.

Someone should write an article for us and it should be, if possible, circulated through the American and Continental Press on the Congress of Vienna and the Emperor Alexander of Russia. Alexander had ideas not unlike Wilson's. He desired to base a world settlement on the freedom of all nations. He was overborne by Metternich and Castlereagh. Had he succeeded, the late war would not have occurred. All Europe might have escaped war for the past one hundred years and a General League of all Nations exist. Let it be pointed out that Wilson stands in relation to foresight and idealism now very much in the position of Alexander, but that he

has what Alexander has not, the power to make his ideas prevail. Let it be pointed out that the consequences of failure must be as disastrous to the world as the consequences of the failure of Alexander.

The fact of Ireland's over-taxation as revealed in the 1896 Report should be circulated. Get Sexton to write on them. See statement in report that Ireland without England's rule over her would be not less self supporting and independent than Sweden.

As to Fishery co-operation, Father Farragher of Aran Island who has been a Sinn Féiner for many years discussed this matter with me one day incidentally in my office. He has put a successful scheme in operation. He might be consulted.

The general strike is a weapon that might injure as much as it serves. It would be injudicious at present and might be injudicious at any time unless under extreme circumstances even then it could only be effective and not hurtful to ourselves in so far as its inconvenience could be made to fall on the English garrison and England. This is possible to achieve but difficult.

The non-payment of Land Purchase annuities is not practicable at present, I think. See the Land Purchase Act and the provisions for making default of Irish payments good by withholding Irish monies controlled by Treasury. It would also be difficult to induce many of the farmers to so act. It might, in a great crisis, be a possible temporary weapon, but it could achieve nothing at present, and would be more likely to react against us.

A memorandum on how Irish taxation is collected should be made out for the Dail. Two-thirds of the taxation is indirect. Of the other one-third, chiefly composed of Income Tax—much of it is collected by deduction or stoppage before payment. Resistance might be made to the Income

Tax. Get Byrne or Galvin to make out (a) Amount of Income Tax paid (b) How much of this payment made by way of deduction by Government (c) How much actually collected from payers (d) Proportion (e) The whole taxation of Ireland.

An interesting article might be written and the American journals in Ireland got to send the gist of it—contrasting Ireland and America, both under English rule in 1775. Then assuming that the American Revolution had failed, tracing on the lines of how Ireland has fared, America would have fared or how she would stand at the present day. Instead of becoming as she has become the greatest power in the world, with a population of 100,000,000 she would be to-day a small population governed like Ireland from London in the interests of England. The American Tories who fought against the Revolution and whom England still officially recognises in Canada where they took refuge by the title of "United Empire Royalists" (an implied admission that England still regards the Americans as merely successful rebels, and that she secretly considers the U.S.A. but as the lost provinces of her "united Empire"—yet to be regained) would form an ascendancy class in the United States to-day—George Washington would be execrated in the official histories as a rebel, and Benedict Arnold would be held up by the English Government in America as the true type of American patriotism. Drive this analogy home to the Yankees. Remind them that England denounced them "as enemies of the Empire" "rebels" and "Traitors" "pro-Frenchmen" and "pro-Spaniards" because they solicited and received help from France and Spain when they were rebels against England. Show them if they had failed they would be governed and plundered by England as Ireland is to-day.

The Importance of Dail Éireann

by

MICHAEL HAYES

THE setting up of *Dail Éireann* in January, 1919, in denial of the right of the British Government to govern Ireland, and in an endeavour to substitute Irish for British rule took place within the jurisdiction of an empire that then had millions of men under arms and had firmly entrenched and long established organs of government in Ireland.

In the election of December, 1918, *Sinn Féin* had won a seventy per cent majority of the parliamentary seats in all Ireland. For those who regarded Ireland as a political unit, this was as clear an electoral decision as anyone could desire. The *Dail* claimed to have the right to govern in the name of the Irish people. It claimed that its ministers were the rightful governors of Ireland and set about making their rule as real as possible. The *Dail*, against enormous odds, was successful to a degree in making good its claim, even before the Truce of July, 1921, and the subsequent Treaty. True, its members were "on the run." It could not meet in comfort, in public or in

safety. Most of its meetings, including all those held in public, took place between January, 1919, and 10 September, 1919, when the *Dail* was proclaimed an illegal assembly by the British Government. From 21 January to 26 August, 1919, thirteen meetings in all were held, four in public and nine in private. After that date in 1919 only one meeting was held—a private meeting on 27 October, 1919, making fourteen meetings in all in that year. Every effort was made to prevent the British from capturing in one swoop all the leaders of the movement. Therefore there was an avoidance of meetings of the *Dail*.

In the nature of things the government elected by the *Dail* had more influence on the course of the struggle, and so indeed had the military leaders, than the *Dail* itself, but the existence of an Irish Parliament made a vital difference at every phase of the conflict against external, and later internal, opponents. The Parliament was a source of authority, a symbol of resistance, rather than a legislative assembly. It was

more a focus of propaganda than an organ for criticising an executive or passing bills into law. It enabled fighting to be conducted against the British by men who regarded themselves as soldiers, not as conspirators or rebels; who held clear military ranks, and who were directed by a general headquarters' staff deriving its authority from a parliament with a Minister for Defence.

The existence of the *Dail* later enabled both sides, British and Irish, to find negotiators whose authority and credentials were beyond question. But for the *Dail*, the Treaty could not have been negotiated, signed, debated or approved in so regular a manner. True, the debates on the Treaty were lengthy, often irrelevant and occasionally bitter, but they were held mainly in the open and reported in the press. The same *Dail* later gave authority for the conduct of elections in 1922 and supplied machinery for the transfer of the functions of government from British to Irish hands. The Provisional Government from the Irish point of view derived its authority from the motion passed in *Dail Éireann* approving of the Treaty. It was directly due to the setting up of *Dail Éireann* in 1919 that the Third *Dail*, or Provisional Parliament, was enabled from September, 1922, to debate and pass a *Constitution* for the Irish Free State and to give authority for the conduct and conclusion of the civil war. Later still, the existence of a parliament enabled, perhaps one should say compelled, the dissident anti-Treaty minority to enter the *Dail* and take their share in the work of parliament and government. Abstention from a fully functioning Irish parliament in Dublin was impossible to maintain.

The *Dail*, too, served as a solvent of the emotional bitterness of the civil war. Comparison has often been made between the Parnell Split of 1891 and the civil war of 1922/23, but there were radical differences between the two. The Parnell Split

took place in the absence of any Irish institutions of government. When it was over neither the victors nor the vanquished in the split had any worthwhile work to do. Parnell was dead. Home Rule appeared to be buried in his grave and there was no possibility of an agreed figure to succeed him. Long and complicated negotiations for a successor lasted ten years. In 1922 the existence of *Dail Éireann* and the necessity to carry on government and parliament made for a totally different situation. There was work that had to be done and there was a machinery for replacing lost leaders.

Griffith died while he was President of *Dail Éireann* and was succeeded at once as acting President by William T. Cosgrave. Michael Collins was killed while he was chairman of the provisional government and commander-in-chief of the army. His successors were chosen at once. At that time I was Minister for Education. I remember the cabinet meeting in the small hours of the morning to which members of the government were brought by military lorries. The meeting was calm and brief. W. T. Cosgrave was confirmed as acting chairman of the Provisional Government, and Richard Mulcahy became commander-in-chief of the army. Authority had to be maintained; government had to go on. A new state had to be founded in accord with the decision of *Dail Éireann*.

During the civil war too, parliament and government had to go on. When the authority of the *Dail* and its government was challenged in arms by Irishmen, some of them members of *Dail Éireann*, the existence of an elected assembly and a responsible government enabled that challenge to be met and defeated. The *Dail* which met in September, 1922, elected a government and passed a *Constitution* for the new State. As well as doing that it gave powers to the army to assert the authority of the *Dail* and the government over their armed opponents. The *Dail* enabled the actions or the omissions of the government

to be publicly debated. It is difficult to see how, otherwise, armed resistance could have been overcome without abandonment of the democratic process.

The election of 1923 left the anti-Treaty party with a substantial number of seats—44 out of 153. They pursued a policy of abstention and non-recognition of the right of the *Dail* to govern, but for a minority party inside the state such a policy clearly could not continue. As *Ceann Comhairle* of *Dail Éireann*, I made provision in the Chamber, physically, for the presence of 153 deputies in the sure belief that all of them would eventually take their seats.

In 1926, when *Fianna Fáil* was founded, it was apparent to political observers that de Valera was about to bring his followers into the *Dail*. In August 1927 he and his party came in, and here again the importance of the existence of a parliamentary assembly was shown. The government front bench and the men opposite them had actually been in arms against one another. All the elements appeared to be present which would lead to continuous wrangling and disorder. *Sinn Féin* had split into two sections. Its leaders had been in physical conflict with one another. Those who supported the Treaty and who said they were fighting for majority rule, for the right of the voters to accept or reject the Treaty, had won the civil war. There had been an armed struggle, loss of life, damage to property and executions. There was soreness and bitterness on both sides and almost total separation socially and politically. There was no place where the opponents could meet and nothing they could discuss except the rights and wrongs of the conflict. But in the *Dail* they found a place for discussion of national problems and indeed for the re-forming of personal associations which had once been very intimate. The *Dail* worked with very few scenes and very little discord. There was never anything approaching physical violence—not unknown in the British

parliament. The ordinary parliamentary work that had to be done reduced the tension and made for orderly debate on agriculture, education, local government and such like subjects. Credit for that state of affairs goes to many deputies on all sides of the House. There were flares and flashes occasionally about prisoners and executions, and references to the civil war, but the ordinary work that had to be done smothered the fires of resentment and ill feeling and the *Dail* acted as a solvent for the emotional aftermath of the war between brothers.

The existence of an Irish assembly had changed the whole character of Irish resistance. The rebellions of 1798, 1803, 1848, 1867 and 1916 had been the work of secret societies or conspiracies where defeat or victory was staked on a single fight or operation. The Irish Volunteers came into existence before the *Dail*. Before the foundation of the Volunteers, Arthur Griffith in his writings, and his speeches had added to traditional Irish nationalism an economic, cultural and political policy, together with a practical plan. It was in accordance with Griffith's plan that *Dail Éireann* began as an open body in the light of day. The Volunteers became the army of the *Dail* which authorised or recognised fighting of a special hit and run character—a policy of small engagements with mobile columns avoiding head-on collision and enabling the Irish forces to disengage themselves without being destroyed or losing their weapons. The Volunteers were indeed the most effective weapon in the armoury of *Dail Éireann*.

The propaganda sent out from *Dail Éireann* in Dublin had its influence in Britain, in the United States of America and in the Dominions, besides attracting publicity in various European countries. The name was well known so that when on the 10 September, 1919, the British government by proclamation declared *Dail Éireann* to be an illegal assembly they were,



DAIL ÉIREANN, JANUARY 1919

Front row: l. to r. J. O'Doherty, J. Hayes, J. J. O'Kelly, Count Plunkett, Cathal Brugha, Seán T. O'Kelly, P. Ó Máille, J. J. Walsh, T. Kelly. Second row: J. Sweeney, K. O'Higgins, D. Buckley, P. Ward, P. J. Moloney, R. Sweetman. Third row: R. Barton, E. Duggan, P. Béaslaí, Doctor J. Ryan, Doctor Crowley, J. Burke. Back row: R. Mulcahy, C. Collins, P. Shanahan.

before the world, outlawing the great majority of the representatives of Ireland duly elected under British law. It was difficult to keep on pretending that resistance in Ireland came from a small band of gangsters who were breaking the king's peace and terrorising the king's loyal subjects.

There were other difficulties created for the British Government by *Dail Éireann*, its army and its ministers. The Volunteer policy supported by the civilian population was successful in driving the Royal Irish Constabulary out of their rural barracks and leaving the British Government over a great area of the countryside without the eyes and the ears on which their whole administration depended. The general officer commanding the British forces in Ireland, Sir Neville Macready, declared himself unable to cope with the military situation without more powers and more men. But to put the country in charge of a general with *carte-blanche* to take such military measures as seemed good to him,

would have run quite counter to the British theory about what they were doing in Ireland.

In the end, the British government were faced with two alternatives: to hand over the settlement of the military situation to a general with full powers, or to come to terms with their opponents. When they decided to take the second alternative they had the *Dail* with which to deal and without it, it is difficult to see how any terms could have been arranged, and if arranged how they could have been put into operation. A dangerous vacuum often occurs after a successful revolution. The old authority has been destroyed but no new one has yet been created. In our case that situation was avoided by the existence of the *Dail* and its Government, which had made a partially successful attempt to set up Irish Institutions of State as a replacement for the British organs of government whose authority we denied and which we did our best to destroy.

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General Mulcahy

by

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in the course of a ministerial statement of policy said:—

There is in Ireland at this moment only one lawful authority, and that authority is the elected Government of the Irish Republic. Of the other power claiming authority we can say, adapting the words of Cardinal Mercier:—

"The authority of that power is no lawful authority. Therefore in soul and conscience the Irish people owe it neither respect nor attachment, nor obedience. The sole authority in this country is the authority of the elected representatives of the Irish Nation. This authority alone has the right to our affection and to our submission. . . The acts of the usurper have in themselves no authority and such of those acts as affect the general interests and to which we may give ratification will have authority only in virtue of such ratification which alone gives them juridic value.

" . . . Towards the persons of those who hold dominion among us by military force we shall conduct ourselves with all needful forbearance. We shall observe the rules they have laid upon us so long as those rules do not violate our personal liberty, nor our consciences, nor our duty to our country."

"Our attitude towards the powers that maintain themselves here against the expressed will of the people shall then in a word be this: We shall conduct ourselves towards them in such a way as will make it clear to the world that we acknowledge no right of theirs. Such use of their laws as we shall make will be dictated solely by necessity, and only in so far as we deem them for the public good.

"In order to secure for our own *de jure* government, and for the Irish Republic which the Irish people have willed to set up, the necessary international recognition, we shall send at once our accredited representatives to Paris to the Peace Conference and to the League of Nations. We shall give them all necessary authority, and that they may proceed there in a manner befitting their character as the representatives of a nation, we shall apply for the necessary safe conduct to enable them to pass through the naval and military cordons with which the

power in occupation of our country has surrounded us. . . .

"The Minister of National Defence is, of course, in close association with the voluntary military forces which are the foundation of the National Army."

In concluding his statement to the Dail the President laid emphasis on that fact that "our best energies are being absorbed with the international situation of the moment."

The proceedings of the Sinn Féin Ard Fheis which opened on 8 April, 1919, were a reminder of the necessity to "find the people" in reviewing the year 1919. The position of the army had been clearly defined in the President's speech above and accepted. The people in their work would deploy themselves over a wide field on many activities that would devolve from the parliament.

The Irish Volunteers had been re-organised at the Convention in October 1917 to "secure and maintain the rights and liberties common to all the people of Ireland". Now at a critical juncture of world history they helped the people to reach a point of having established a parliament through which to proclaim their rights and liberties before the world and to watch over and guard the development and progress of their political and economic life at home.

Speaking at this meeting of the Ard Fheis, President de Valera declared that the Irish Volunteers who, he said, were Ireland's National Army, were the last reserve; that their position that day was, thank God, a happy one; that they now had a national government behind them, and no further moral sanction was needed. They had placed themselves at the disposal of the elected government of the Irish people. They would stand by that government of the Irish Nation and would do exactly as the government commanded them.

The position of the army as stated by the President was further strengthened by

the presence in the cabinet of Cathal Brugha as Minister for Defence and Michael Collins as Minister for Finance, who held at the same time the responsibility for Organisation and Intelligence in the general headquarters' staff, and by my position as assistant Minister for Defence and also chief of the general headquarters' staff. Complete confidence and closest possible understanding and co-operation between the army and government was thus secured and the general headquarters' staff were able to be informed fully on every aspect of government policy which it was necessary or useful for them to know without the chief of staff's being involved in the minutiae of the discussions of general government policy. For completeness sake it may be well to name the general headquarters' staff at this precise period. The chief of staff was Richard Mulcahy, Michael Collins was adjutant general, director of organisation and intelligence; Jeremiah J. O'Connell, assistant chief of staff; Seán McMahon, quarter-master general; Dick McKee, director of training (he was also officer commanding the Dublin brigade); Rory O'Connor, director of engineering, and Piaras Biaslai, editor of *An tOglach*.

In the meantime the standing committee of *Sinn Féin* had long looked forward to being relieved of the responsibility that the electorate had placed on their shoulders during the period from the end of December, 1918 to 21 January, 1919. They had hoped that when the available twenty-eight Dail members assembled and formed a Cabinet they could get back to their political organising. They began right away preparations for calling an *Ard Fheis*. They set up a special committee of which Cathal Brugha, Michael Collins and I were among the members to draft a plan and programme for consideration by the standing committee and subsequent approval by the *Ard Comhairle* and the *Ard Fheis*. Part of this programme introduced the various lists of work for which

directors were required. Of the eleven departments suggested for the *Sinn Féin* organisation, Departments for Elections, Organisations, Propaganda (including lectures and libraries), would naturally be part of political organisation. The other departments—Irish Language, Industries, Trade and Commerce, Finance (organisation), Agriculture, Public Health, Local Government, Foreign Affairs, National Finance and Land Cultivation were not intended to supplant the work of the government, but to serve as an information service in forming Dail policy. The fear was expressed that the *Sinn Féin* executive was in danger of being looked on as the government of the country and now that we had an established parliament, that danger should be avoided. Other interests and other bodies should have direct relations with the government properly set up by the people. Until this was better understood and the country prepared for it, it was decided that for the moment the departments to be set up at the *Ard Fheis* would be confined to organisations, elections, propaganda and foreign affairs.

Other impressions and views of the importance of the people who are the principal concern of parliament and politics, can be gained from the discussions at the *Ard Fheis* on Labour and the contribution of the workers to the national resurgence, and from a discussion of a motion on proportional representation. The motion was unacceptable and was unanimously defeated. The opportunity for discussion was, however, welcomed in order to appraise the system of proportional representation as a just and fair plan of representation and as giving every voter an equal value voting paper. The remarks in a letter addressed, on 23 January, from Gloucester jail by Arthur Griffith to his comrades in Dail Éireann and in the *Sinn Féin* organisation gives greater depth to the importance of the people and to the extent and variety of the work they had to

do. (His letter is published on page 330 of this issue of *The Capuchin Annual*.)

By 1 June, Mr. de Valera had left to work for Ireland's cause in the United States and by the middle of June it was announced that he had nominated Arthur Griffith as his deputy president during his absence. We were fortunate in the assurance of a striking declaration of the mutual appreciation existing between the two leaders.

At the *Ard Fheis* on 9 April, Griffith had referred to de Valera as:

"a man in whose judgement and rectitude we can absolutely trust; a great leader; a man with a wonderful judgement such as I never met in a young man except in Parnell. Since Parnell's day there was not a man to equal de Valera, and I am sure in following and standing by him loyally, we shall bring the Irish cause to that goal for which many Irishmen in hopeful generations suffered, and we have lived in hopeful generations."

And on Saturday, 31 May, at a reception given to Griffith by the members of the *Ard Craobh* branch of *Sinn Féin* who had been among the "German plot" prisoners, de Valera paid tribute to Griffith saying:

"It is not necessary in the presence of those who have been in the fight to go over the ground for them, and to remind them that the world position which *Sinn Féin* occupies today has been due to the efforts of Arthur Griffith as much as to the efforts of any other living man. The political position that we are in is due principally to Arthur Griffith, and the greatest tribute that could be accorded him is that what he thought yesterday, Ireland is thinking today. When after we got out from prison and I was elected for Clare, I said that I regarded the victory in Clare as a monument to the dead, and were it not for the previous teaching of Arthur Griffith, I believe that monument to the dead could not have been raised. I believe his teaching in the past has made people think properly,

and when the fight that was made in 1916 was put up and when the men then made their own heroic sacrifice, they then understood, but would not have understood what was at issue, had not the teaching of Arthur Griffith and his friends preceded it."

While de Valera was paying this tribute to Arthur Griffith, Collins was in Martin Conlon's house in Phibsboro' with Gearoid O'Sullivan, Seán Ó Murthuile and Diarmuid O'Hegarty and some others. A messenger came there to tell Collins that a man from Liverpool was at Vaughan's Hotel waiting to see him. At 12 o'clock that night Collins got the message which started off:

Dear Mick,

I hope your letter has not reached me too late to take advantage of the best opportunity that may arise for a long time for that particular job. That will have happened if the programme arranged by—— and his boatswain who is quite trustworthy, cannot be carried out. It is limited to time, as they must all be on board by Monday morning. The idea is to arrange to smuggle him away . . ."

Little did de Valera know when paying tribute to Griffith that night that his journey to the United States was being planned and that he would be *en route* next day.

By Sunday morning, 1 June, Seán Ó Murthuile was on the boat going to Liverpool. At four a.m. on Monday, de Valera arrived in Liverpool after coming through Birkenhead where he landed. He was very soon aboard boat for the United States, which he reached safely on 11 June. About a week before that, Harry Boland who was going as an emissary to the United States travelled the same journey. That Boland was able to work his way as an "accredited" stoker on his journey to the States indicates the scope of the services available on the trans-Atlantic route, and

the quality of the men who kept it open and safe. These two journeys were an example of the extent of the influence of Michael Collins's organisation.

At the time Fionán Lynch and Austin Stack were prisoners in Manchester jail, Stack had been designated to take over the ministry of Home Affairs from Griffith. Before Seán Ó Murthuile left England to come back to Dublin, he visited Manchester jail and was able to visit the two prisoners. The opportunity was taken to discuss the possibility of Stack's rescue. It was not until October that, with the assistance of further information brought home on Fionán Lynch's release from there, that Stack was successfully rescued and brought home to take up his ministry. This was also the work of Collins's intelligence organisation.

In pursuit of the Government's declared policy of concentrating its best energies on the international situation, the President had been transplanted in an unexpected space of little over twenty-four hours to a ship bound for the United States. President Wilson might be prevented by Mr. Lloyd George from seeing the members of the American Commission for Irish Independence, appointed by the Irish Race Convention to present Ireland's case at the Peace Conference, but the Irish President would now be in a position to make heard from the platform of the shoulders of the American people Ireland's voice and invoke America's principles of freedom in presenting his case in the United States.

For the people at home in Ireland who had elected the Parliament and for the *Sinn Féin* Organisation who had helped the people, a breathing space had arrived in their work. For the Irish Volunteers, their work promised to be more urgent, more burdensome and more responsible.

In many parts of the country where the Volunteers were well organised, the frustration and disappointment of Easter 1916 was very keenly felt. Generally this was

patiently and stoically borne. The unexpected early release of the 1916 prisoners and the stimulating work for, and the results of, the 1917 by-elections and conventions had effectively restored their enthusiasms and morale and the people's minds eagerly questioned the future. There had been a persistent, insolent month by month aggression by the police, which disturbed the people's peace, frustrated the work of their daily lives and injured dangerously their sense of dignity and independence. This provoked public anger.

When the general headquarters' staff was established in the beginning of 1918 its dominant concern was that while encouraging a strong spirit of reaction against such aggression, it would foster prudence, patience and discipline in avoiding situations leading to conflict and exposing the Volunteers and the people to the losses and the danger of disclosing to the aggressors our intrinsic weakness. The recorded statistics of British provocation for the end of the year 1917 were 719; for 1918, 2,624 and for 1919 up to September, 7,655. These included 259 general suppressions.

The dangers associated with the situation varied greatly in degree according to the temper and disposition of the local police and of British officials, the type of pressure exerted by them and the sufferings of the people. There were many reasons why the confidence of the people in the Government and its policy would depend upon the initiative, the strength, the courage and discipline of the local Irish leaders, both civil and army. In many areas, where the pressures of aggression were very great and the spirit of opposition strong, violent reaction by the people created different problems of control for the general headquarters' staff.

In mapping afterwards this situation over the country the greatest incidence of enemy provocation showed itself over the counties

of Tipperary, Cork, Limerick and Clare. Dublin city was a special area. Those who want to observe and study to-day the events and developments of the year 1919 will not understand them without some knowledge of the problems in this arena.

In the case of south Tipperary the planning of the episode in which two members of the R.I.C. lost their lives at Soloheadbeg on 21 January, 1919 (the day on which Dail Éireann had its first public meeting), falls naturally into the general position of local initiative in reaction against aggression. It calls for special mention here, only by reason of the fact that in a serialised account of *The History of the Third Tipperary Brigade* by an apparently authorised writer, certain statements were made. These we have to quote and repudiate.

The first is a statement made to the effect that "the Irish Republican Brotherhood was to a very great extent the power behind the scenes of the Volunteer movement, through its members on the executive and general headquarters' staff who practically controlled the Volunteer army."

Here is the text of the writer's own narrative. (Seán Treacy was a prisoner.) "At a meeting of the Tipperary I.R.B. at which delegates from Donohill and Donaskeigh attended, it was decided to capture the policeman who had arrested Seán and detain him as a hostage for Treacy's safety. This was Sergeant Hamilton of the Limerick Junction police garrison who, in company with a constable, patrolled the railway line regularly between Limerick Junction and Newtown Bridge. During the period of his detention he was to be deprived of food, and in fact, compelled to go on a forced hunger-strike!

"Fourteen men were mobilised for the capture of Sergeant Hamilton but, fortunately for the Sergeant and his fellow-policeman, they did not patrol

the line on that particular evening, and so the scheme fell through. All the men mobilised for the job were members of the Irish Republican Brotherhood. That secret organisation was, to a very great extent, the "power behind the scenes" in the Volunteer movement, through its members on the executive and general headquarters' staff who practically controlled the Volunteer Army. Most of the active officers were members of the I.R.B. and in Tipperary the I.R.B. men played a very important part in the organisation and formation of the Third Tipperary Brigade. The leaders of the organisation in Dublin did not, however, approve of the plan to capture Sergeant Hamilton, those who planned the operation being later censured by Seán Ó Murthuile, I.R.B. organiser. The Irish Republican Brotherhood, he stated, stood for something higher than the capture of a "bloody old policeman". Many of the Tipperary officers severed their connection with the I.R.B. after this, and the Tipperary circle of the Brotherhood never again met. It had become apparent to those men that they could not serve two masters."

As comment on that quotation I must state:

(1) The Irish Volunteers were first established in October 1913 as an organised, disciplined force devoted to assisting and supporting a people struggling to establish a democratic and sovereign Irish Parliament which would secure and protect the rights and liberties of the people.

(2) The Irish Republican Brotherhood supported unwaveringly in its own political way the establishment of that parliament.

(3) On the establishment of the Irish Volunteers the I.R.B. instructed its members to "join the Volunteers and take their orders from their volunteer superior officers."



Scene of Soloheadbeg ambush—21 January, 1919.

(4) Never since that time did a member of the Volunteers (under any of its descriptions) receive from any I.R.B. authority a direction of any kind as to any action of his as a volunteer or any other action of his with military significance.

(5) From the time of the election and establishment of the Dail Government, the I.R.B. organisation changed whatever constitution it had to enable its members freely to support that parliament and government.

(6) From the time of the establishment of the government the general headquarters' staff and the whole Volunteer organisation gave their allegiance and support unflinchingly and indeviatingly with or without any oath taken whether by the Government or by the Volunteers, and no member of the Irish Republican Brotherhood was prevented by any bond with the Brotherhood from giving its allegiance and its service to the Government which had been elected by the people in 1918.

The second matter to be taken notice of is that in the course of his *History of the*

Third Tipperary Brigade (Clonmel Nationalist, November 30, 1957) the authorised writer states:—

"Tipperary was now a "Military Area" and the people were made to feel the full rigours of martial law which was administered in the traditional Dublin Castle style. The Brigade leaders, hunted fugitives as they were, did not allow this exercise of foreign authority to go unchallenged. A meeting of the Brigade Officers was convened at Nodstown, Cashel, on February 23 — — — —.

It was decided to issue a proclamation ordering all British military and police forces out of South Tipperary by a certain date and stating in addition, that any supporter of the foreign Government found residing within the Brigade area after that date would be held to have forfeited his life. This proclamation which was both a reply to the British proclamation of martial law, and an intimation to the British and to the public at large that a state of war now existed, was signed by Seamus Robinson in his capacity of Brigadier and aroused intense indignation in certain quarters, being

quoted by Lord Birkenhead in the House of Lords on April 14th.

The proclamation issued by the I.R.A. military authorities in South Tipperary was posted up in prominent places all over the area and left no one, friend or foe, in doubt as to the determination of the Brigade leaders to wage unrelenting and even ruthless war against the forces of the British Crown. It may be added that G.H.Q. in Dublin refused to sanction this proclamation but the Brigade authorities went ahead, notwithstanding, and made it public. It was not the first time differences of opinion had arisen between G.H.Q. and the South Tipperary Brigade, nor would it be the last."

This marks initiative no doubt, but it is initiative in the crude state, it is like crude oil, undistilled, unrefined, able to poison a sea, to tarnish a beach and to disrupt the lives and minds of a whole people. The quality of the Tipperary men's initiative in its potential for effective use in action was demonstrated and guaranteed by the quality of the successful rescue of Seán Hogan at Knocklong in May. In the necessary initiative and effectiveness of the people generally, the initiative, discipline and order of the army which was an intrinsic part of the people, was an essential element without which the cause of the people would crumble and the parliament for which they were the strength would be destroyed. No cure for the malaise in the army command in South Tipperary could be found in military manuals or in any order that could be issued from the general headquarters' staff. A processing and a cure, however, was to spring from the character of the men themselves and the people around them in the continuing development of the urgent and natural work of the general headquarters' staff. Many of them came from time to time to Dublin where they met and became friendly with the men of the Dublin



Commandant Seán Hogan

Brigade under Dick McKee and those of Collins's intelligence organisation and participated in their work. They found encouragement in the close-knit unity and solidarity of the Volunteers in the capital.

Strengthened and encouraged by the success in planning the release of prisoners from the jail; thus enabling the full Dail to assemble and to provide the authority of an Irish Government, the Intelligence Department prepared to penetrate more deeply into the sources of information of British officialdom. The government now functioned and this afforded them greater help in gaining access to information. A more accurate knowledge was available of the dangers to be encountered from British planning. It became imperative to organise increased army communication services in Dublin and to provide a small action force ready to act instantly on on-the-spot information. It was particularly devoted at first to the security and the

protection of persons whose safety was essential for the maintenance of the parliament, and its subsidiary groups necessary to the parliament's work. Towards the end of July, therefore, a small group of seven men was formed to act under Collins, the director of intelligence, and his immediate officers. These became known as "the Squad". A larger group was developed in the Dublin Brigade under Dick McKee of picked Volunteers who formed an active service unit and by the end of September it was possible to increase the number instantly available to the intelligence department and to extend under the control of the commanding officer of the Dublin Brigade, an active service unit to take instant action where such was demanded in the brigade area.

In these activities many officers and men who came from the country from time to time had an opportunity of taking part in, and of being closely associated with, the activities of the men most connected with

the security and defence of the parliament. Soon after the Knocklong success the officers of the South Tipperary Brigade had occasion to spend some time in Dublin and they became deeply involved in this Dublin activity and harmonized with the men of the Dublin Brigade.

Collins's Intelligence and the Squad made it easy to convey to the police forces in Dublin that the activities of the police spies, who were helping the English Government to destroy the Irish Parliament, would no longer be tolerated. After warning had been given and a short time left for it to sink in, the first of the detective spies to forfeit his life was shot at the end of July, a second was shot in September and two others in November. The eyes of Dublin Castle had been put out. When in an attempt at restoration, an outside police spy officer was introduced, he was shot before the end of January 1920, and the British resorted to different methods during that year; they introduced British spies.



Knocklong Station on the main Dublin-Cork line. The spot marked X indicates where Seán Hogan was rescued on 13 May, 1919.

During the few days the new spy chief was in office, Collins found himself in the *Sinn Féin* headquarters at 6 Harcourt Street, when it was raided. He bluffed his way through a new, young detective's questioning, by displaying a naïve lack of responsibility; he pretended to be a clerk in the office and attacked the detective for the dirty work he was doing as an Irishman. The incident caused amusement as well as chagrin in Castle quarters when they heard it.

Local initiative in Clare caused a problem also. In this a fine officer, Michael Brennan, played an important part. He returned to Clare at the end of January 1919 after a protracted period of imprisonment. He found the Volunteers in this situation: his brother, Paddy, had left the post of commanding officer on the East Clare Brigade. Another brother, Austin, had taken over command, but only until Michael returned. Michael, with some reluctance, accepted command and then immediately began a campaign of organising new units, arranging for their training and keeping the Volunteers constantly in the public eye. While this good work was going on courageously and well, an incident occurred in Limerick that horrified the people of the surrounding countryside.

Robert Byrne, a Volunteer, had been arrested and was held under guard in a Limerick hospital. The Volunteers raided the hospital in an attempt to rescue him. The police shot the prisoner during the rescue operation and this callous act appalled the people of Limerick and provoked a wave of indignant anger. In protest and in sympathy the people universally demanded a military funeral. People and Volunteers from all the surrounding districts poured into the city on the day of the funeral and the protest reached gigantic proportions. Michael Brennan, officer commanding the East Clare Brigade, was chosen by the officers of the various other contingents to take command of the massed strength of

all the Volunteers who marched in military formation at the funeral of their companion. The British authorities reacted to this manifestation of disapproval with typical show of domination. They declared Limerick and suburbs a military area, invested the city with troops and demanded that everyone entering the city should get a permit to do so from some branch of the occupation forces.

This action caused disruption in the industrial and commercial life of the city. The people gave their own answer to this.

A strike was called against the military action and a special committee representative of the national executive of the labour party and trade union congress was formed to control and direct the most urgent aspects of the city's life. The names of the labour leaders involved deserve to be recorded as they represented in a remarkable way the action of "the people", in this instance. They include Tom Johnson, William O'Brien, J. T. O'Farrell, Tommy Foran, Tom Daly, Tom McPartlin, Michael Keyes, John Cronin. For many who may still remember the period and the circumstances, the mention of this group of names will recall a characteristic element of sterling value in the society of the times.

Instructed by the Government to supervise the situation on its behalf I got into Limerick without any difficulty by leaving the train there, although I had a ticket to Ennis. Michael Brennan, my principal support and representative, organised the fullest co-operation of all the neighbouring Volunteer units. Brennan accepted an invitation to become a member of the strike supervising committee, and his services during the period of the strike in April and the funeral of Robert Byrne were commended and appreciated by all. It demonstrated to the general headquarters' staff the strength and the reliability of the Volunteers in the important area of Clare-Limerick. It increased my embarrassment at a critical moment later in the year when



Scene from the first propaganda film for the Irish Republic made by John MacDonagh, brother of Thomas, who was executed in 1916, shows Michael Collins, Minister for Finance, opening the Internal loan in 1919. Diarmuid O'Hegarty is with him and the house is Saint Enda's, Pearse's school. The Volunteers ordered the film to be shown in the commercial cinemas.

an excess of initiative on his part was awkward and might have been serious.

By the beginning of July, three months after the Limerick incidents, it was clear that the country was being subjected increasingly and in various ways to a régime of martial law. By the middle of July orders were issued suppressing the Volunteers, *Sinn Féin*, *Cumann na mBan* and other Irish organisations. Occasional local reactions by the Volunteers against the police continued. By the middle of August there was widespread suppression of the press. In early September an effective and successful action by Liam Lynch in disarming a military party in Fermoy resulted in the deliberate destruction by

the British forces of a large section of the town. No one was left in any doubt about how the alien occupation forces would deal with Irish people who opposed their harsh régime. By the middle of September the British came to a fateful decision about the lawfully elected Irish parliament, on 12 September they proclaimed the Dail. No answer had yet been decided by the Dail or the general headquarters' staff when the wind brought a suggestion from Clare that the officer commanding the East Clare Brigade was on the point of attacking all the R.I.C. barracks in Clare. When this plan became known, I had to see him at once to persuade him that our next move would have to be planned in an entirely

different manner, and that such an operation of his could be gravely upsetting. He could see in the abandoning his plan nothing but the loss of arms that he felt he could certainly secure but soldiers are soldiers and he would be so. He dropped this plan. In early November the East Clare men who were making their own of Limerick and its resources raided the Limerick post office and seized £1,500. The position was that they wanted arms and if they were not allowed to take them from the R.I.C., they would have to buy them "honestly". The outcome was that I invited Michael Brennan to Dublin and put before him that my authority in my sphere and his authority in his could not but be exposed to damage by the action taken; that the people's confidence in the army could be impaired at a time of imminent decisions of importance for the army. Again he took up a good soldierly attitude when I put it to him that his brother, Austin, take up the post of officer commanding again. The brigade were allowed hold on to the money and to spend it on arms if they could get them. Michael Brennan remained in Dublin until about Christmas looking after the purchasing of arms. He also joined in the comradeship and the work of the active service unit and the intelligence branch. There he met, to his surprise, Seán Treacy, Dan Breen and Seamus Robinson from Tipperary with other provincial leaders who came to Dublin now and then. He returned to Clare after the general hostilities began and elected to devote himself to operational work in the column and became a very successful column commander.

Cork comes next and forms a different pattern of the people's initiative. My wife and I were living in a flat in Cullenswood House, Oakley Road, the house where Pearse had his first school. I was not on the run. Michael Collins had a small room in the house on the ground floor facing the road but below the level of the steps and

protected from observation by the road. He used this room as an office. Though he was probably "on the run" no one would suspect it as he moved about so freely. One afternoon at the end of October I saw Tomás MacCurtain leaving the house after a talk with Collins. He waved his hand to me on seeing me by way of salutation. As he hurried out he called across to me: "Terry will be coming up to you in about a week's time. He has something on his mind. Take him easy!" With another wave of his hand he was gone.

A week later Terence McSwiney, who was Tomás's vice-commandant in the first Cork Brigade, came to me at Cullenswood House. He had something on his mind all right. He explained that he considered that we in Dublin did not understand the country; that they had been drilling and organising for six years from 1913; that their readiness to put their organisation and their training to some use in 1916 had been frustrated by the confusing circumstances of the time. Three years had passed since then in drilling and preparing and they could not hope to continue at that kind of thing any longer. They all had begun to suffer frustration after so many years of control and inactivity. They could stand it no longer. What he wanted and what they wanted in Cork was permission to take the field themselves. They would organise an attack on ten police barracks outside Cork city towards Macroom and start a Rising in Cork themselves. They could hope to last about a fortnight anyway before they would be wiped out, but the flag would have been raised and in six months time the same could be done in Galway.

It was only necessary for me to suggest: "You couldn't have a travelling rising like that, Terry. What you can do, now that the English have ordered the suppression of the Dail, is to go home and select three barracks in the brigade area and arrange to attack them all in one night: take every possible precaution that those engaged in

the attack will suffer no loss of life and, as far as possible, avoid taking the lives of anyone in the barracks. Disarm the barracks and put it out of action. Let those who engage in the attacks go about their business the following morning as if not a dog had barked in the area." Terry's mind seemed completely relieved and he himself completely satisfied with an answer that gave the men in Cork permission to move. He had no other question to ask, he had no list of supplies that he wanted, he asked for no other advice or instruction or explanation.

The commandant, Tomás MacCurtain, and the brigade staff demonstrated by going ahead without question on their part the quality of patience and the discipline which was theirs through the long period of waiting in the face of increasing provocation from the British forces.

The result was that on the 2 January, 1920, the barracks at Carrigtwohill was scientifically and successfully attacked and overcome; the barracks at Kilmurray near Macroom was subjected to a long distance attack without any result. An attack was also made on a third barracks in the brigade area. The actions in Cork may be considered as the beginning of the nation-wide offensive in reply to the suppression of Dail Éireann. In January, 1920, began a series of follow-up attacks to Cork. An appropriate officer from each of three battalions suitably removed from one another was called to Dublin and instructed that each select one barracks in each of three brigade areas which he would attack during the second fortnight in February. Three officers from three other battalions suitably spaced throughout the country were brought to Dublin and instructed to arrange to attack one barracks in their area in the first fortnight of March. Similar plans were made for the second fortnight in March and again in three other areas sometime in the first fortnight in April. When barracks were attacked as part of this

plan and other barracks were attacked in a movement of voluntary emulation in other districts and barracks were, for security purposes, vacated by the R.I.C. throughout the country, it was possible to order the burning in one concentrated action of all the damaged and the evacuated police buildings throughout the country. The result was spectacular and effective as it took only three or four nights to complete the operation. There were about five hundred reduced to rubble. This was a successful answer to the suppression of the Dail. It freed large areas of the country from police observation. It also destroyed a large number of buildings which otherwise might subsequently have been re-occupied by the British forces for military purposes. The detonation at Carrigtwohill reverberated throughout the whole country and inside three months the roofs had been swept off hundreds of R.I.C. barracks and the police structure and its power in Ireland were seriously disrupted.

The army was now fully alert and organised and aligned to carry out the parliament's instructions through the army's accredited officers. A new hope stirred in people's hearts. The people were given an opportunity of linking up with the administrative machinery of parliament which had the effective backing of their army. Within a fortnight of the proscriptio of the parliament by England's minions the Dail had brought together and established a Commission of Inquiry into the resources and industries of Ireland. While the army was planning its offensive in December 1919, twenty members of the Commission and twenty witnesses giving evidence were in public session in Dublin's City Hall on 9, 10, 11 December. This public inquiry and recording of evidence showed that an Irish nation had begun to function as a separate entity and this substantial change was greeted with enthusiasm and hope by the people of Ireland.



First Dail Éireann in session in the Mansion House, Dublin, on 21 January, 1919; Cathal Brugha at right of table on dais presiding; George Noble Count Plunkett addresses the members.

President de Valera was then in the United States of America, putting Ireland's case for international recognition, and launching the external loan. Picture below shows him in Washington, D.C. with (from left to right, front row): Andrew J. Hickey; John F. Finnerty; Charles J. Russell and Thomas W. Lyons.



THE IRISH VOLUNTEERS' INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION

by

SEAN KAVANAGH

THE Irish Volunteers of 1916 saw no necessity for an intelligence service as such in their organisation, although Dublin Castle had a most efficient information service in the Royal Irish Constabulary and in the political branch of the Detective Division of the Dublin Metropolitan Police. The R.I.C. provided accurate information on every Volunteer company in the country outside of Dublin, while the members of the Political wing of the "G" Division of the D.M.P. reported in detail on every prominent Volunteer in Dublin. After the Rising it was those "political" detectives who identified and selected the leaders for courtmartial and summary execution or long sentences of penal servitude.

Even in the reorganisation of the Volunteers in 1917 no provision was made at first for an intelligence department. At the first Volunteer Convention after the Rising, in October, 1917, Michael Collins was appointed Director of Organisation, and in March, 1918, he was given the additional duties of Adjutant-General. As D.O. he took on the task not only of reorganising all old units throughout the country but of organising new units until a Volunteer company existed

in almost every parish. As Adjutant-General he had the responsibility of inculcating military discipline by setting up a proper staff in each unit, establishing lines of communication and providing training in arms for the fight which he clearly saw was coming.

About the time Collins became A.G. an intelligence department was set up, with Eamonn Duggan, a solicitor, as its first director. It functioned, not very effectively, from Duggan's office in Dame Street, with a staff of one man, Christopher Carberry. Soon afterwards the first move in the creation of a real intelligence service came ironically, from within the ranks of the "G" Division itself when two young detectives in sympathy with the new militant national movement decided to help it by providing advance information on raids and arrests. Eamonn Broy, who was employed in the "G" Division headquarters in Brunswick Street, gave to a Sinn Féin friend of his, Michael Foley, a list of prominent men who were to be rounded up within a few days for what came to be known as the "German Plot." The list quickly found its way to Collins. Two days later the second detective, Joseph Kavanagh, who worked in the

Castle, called into the Capel Street Public Library and told the librarian, Thomas Gay, that preparations were being made for a large number of raids and arrests on that night. This vital information was also immediately conveyed to Collins who sent warnings to as many as possible of those on Broy's list. Many evaded arrest, including Collins himself, but some refused to take the warning seriously and were duly rounded up. Among those arrested were de Valera, Griffith and Cosgrave and other prominent Sinn Féin personalities but very few active Volunteers. From then until the truce in 1921, Collins was "on the run."

He soon made the acquaintance of both Broy and Kavanagh, neither of whom until then knew of the feelings and action of the other. A little later they introduced him to a third detective, James MacNamara, who also worked in the Castle, and the nucleus of a powerful counter intelligence came into existence, which Collins kept under his own control, although he did not become official Director of Intelligence for nearly a year later. He continued to hold the posts of D.O. and A.G. for some time after being appointed Director of Intelligence early in 1919. However, in the late spring or early summer of that year he decided to concentrate all his energies and activities in the Volunteer movement on what he now considered to be the most important department of the Volunteer organisation. Diarmuid O'Hegarty became Director of Organisation and Gearoid O'Sullivan, Adjutant General. Collins was of course then also Minister for Finance which would have been a full-time job for any ordinary man.

He set to work to organise his new department by appointing Liam Tobin, then I.O. of the Dublin Brigade, as assistant director, with Tom Cullen and Frank Thornton as his principal lieutenants. Slowly a staff was built up as suitable men

were found, such as Frank Saurin, Joe Guilfoyle, Charlie Dalton and Joe Dolan. "The Squad" was formed from specially picked Volunteers to be available at all times to carry out particularly dangerous and difficult assignments at very short notice, and not, as some still believe, to be Mick's bodyguard; he always moved about on his bicycle completely alone and unprotected.

By degrees, too, battalion and brigade intelligence officers were appointed throughout the country; the battalion I.O.'s reported to their brigade I.O.'s who were in regular communication with Collins himself. He thus controlled the two branches of his department, intelligence and counter intelligence, the first composed of active Volunteer officers who observed and reported on the opposing forces from the outside and the second mainly of persons in key positions in the service of the British Government.

Outside of Dublin the real Army of Occupation was the police force, the R.I.C., a large armed semi-military body of men who were literally the eyes and ears of the British administration in Ireland. Among them were many good Irishmen who were finding their jobs becoming increasingly unpopular and distasteful and were resigning in steadily increasing numbers, some of the young men to become active Volunteers. There were a few, however, in vital positions who remained at their posts at Collins's request and helped him immensely to build up his counter espionage organisation.

In the Post Office, too, there were men and women who gave him valuable help by intercepting and copying military and police telegrams in cipher. He had such agents in every important post office in the provinces, but of course the most vital and valuable were those working in the Dublin G.P.O. through which passed every official telegram to and from military and police headquarters. His principal agent



Michael Collins as Minister for Finance addresses a gathering in the grounds of Saint Enda's College in the campaign to launch the Internal Loan in 1919. His Intelligence organisation is described in this article.

in the G.P.O. was supplied by him regularly and punctually with the current code keys and so could decipher messages himself. The Brigade I.O.'s were also supplied with the code keys. It is remarkable that practically all secret and confidential orders and instructions were at that time and up to the Treaty sent in code by telegraph, and that little or no use was made of the telephone or postal services for other than harmless routine matters.

Collins had reliable and useful men on the staffs of the Irish prisons, especially in Mountjoy, with whose help he maintained constant communication with political prisoners and organised the sensational jail breaks of 1919—1921. On the railways too, which were his most reliable means of communication with Volunteer

officers and intelligence agents throughout the country, he had a valiant band of men who constantly carried highly confidential letters to and from Dublin as well as conveying supplies of arms and ammunition to the various units. He built up the organisation at the Irish and British ports and on the ships by means of which munitions were smuggled into the country and men like de Valera were smuggled in and out.

During 1919, 1920 and 1921 only Collins himself had a complete picture of the various activities and ramifications of the Intelligence Department of which he was Director. Nobody on his intimate staff, from Tobin down, knew more at any time than Collins wanted him to know or more than was essential for his particular

work. Each of his agents was kept in a watertight compartment and was frequently reminded by him of the necessity for secrecy—"never let one side of your mind know what the other is doing" was one of his favourite pieces of advice. His closest associates on G.H.Q. staff knew the identity of no more than a small fraction of his agents and practically nothing of the service which each was providing. He never mentioned the name of his informant when passing on a fresh piece of intelligence—he was merely "one of my sources of information." If that was the position then how much more hopeless is it now, when most of his trusted assistants and agents are no longer alive to try to give a comprehensive account of Intelligence under Collins. One can only tell, however briefly, one's own story and thus encourage other survivors to record theirs. Already David Neligan has made a valuable contribution.

My own close association with Collins started towards the end of September, 1919. A couple of weeks earlier I had arrived in Naas to take up work as a teacher of Irish, under Gaelic League auspices, to adult classes in north Kildare. During the preceding three years I had been active in Gaelic League, Sinn Fein and Volunteer circles in Waterford City and Co. Kilkenny while teaching in Mount Sion Secondary School. On my first visit to Dublin about a week after coming to Naas I mentioned to my old friend Michael Staines that I had been told by one or two members of the Volunteers of an R.I.C. sergeant in Naas who appeared to be in sympathy with "the boys," having passed on warnings of police raids and searches on a couple of occasions. Staines made no comment beyond "that's interesting," but a week later when I met him again he said "Mick Collins wants to meet you; I was telling him about the sergeant who tipped off the lads in Naas and he'd like to talk to you about him." He brought me immediately

to 46 Parnell Square where Collins was waiting; this was about five o'clock on a weekday afternoon.

It was my first actual meeting with Collins. I had seen him a few times previously at Sinn Fein Conventions and other gatherings and the impression he had made on me was that he was rather truculent and aggressive. The impact he now made was far different and has remained with me ever since; it was the impact of a strong, warm, friendly smiling man with a firm handshake whom I can see as clearly now as I did at the moment of meeting him.

I told him that Sergeant Jerry Maher was the confidential clerk to the County Inspector in Naas who was in charge of Counties Kildare and Carlow, and he replied "he's the very man I'm looking for; if he'd agree to work for us he could be of the greatest possible use." He then told me that what he was particularly anxious to get just then was the key to a new kind of cipher which had recently begun to be used for all important R.I.C. telegrams and which his cipher experts had completely failed to break down. He said: "I have a number of R.I.C. men working for me around the country, including a District Inspector, but they can do nothing about this as nobody below the rank of County Inspector is supposed to use the key to this code." After some discussion Collins decided that I should make contact with Maher myself secretly without the knowledge of any of the local Sinn Feiners or Volunteers. I did so on that same evening as soon as it was dark. I called at his house and was warmly received; he recognised me as the new Irish teacher so I needed no introduction.

I came to the point immediately by telling him that I had been sent by Volunteer headquarters to ask him if he would be willing to help the Intelligence department and he replied, "you're the man I've been waiting for for years." He explained that

only the County Inspector, Kerry Supple, handled the new cipher key which he kept locked in his safe, but promised to do his best to obtain a copy of it. When I returned a couple of nights later he told me that although he hadn't succeeded in getting the complete key to the new code he thought he had enough material to enable it to be broken down. He then produced a copy of a long coded telegram and a number of scraps of paper which he had taken from the County Inspector's waste-paper basket and which were the translation into plain English of the code message. Maher explained how the new system worked—each letter of the alphabet in plain language was represented in the translation by a variety of two-figure numbers—and we proceeded to find the equivalent two-digit number for each letter of the decoded telegram. With the aid of this partial key we tried to decode some copies of telegrams still in code which Maher had also brought with him with the result that we found ourselves with a substantial portion of the key to the current cipher.

On the following night I reported back to Collins, as arranged at our first meeting, at Vaughan's Hotel. He was delighted at the success of my visit to Maher and the progress that had been made. He had a number of code messages in his possession and was now able to build up something like a complete key. However, as the code was changed at least monthly, an easier method of obtaining each new version had to be found; at Collins's suggestion Maher took an opportunity to take a wax impression of the County Inspector's key which I brought to Collins, and in a day or two Maher had his own key to the safe.

Perhaps I should here explain how this new "number" cipher system worked. Each letter of the alphabet in any message in plain language would, when encoded, be represented by a two-figure number, i.e., any number between 00 and 99; full stops were also translated into numbers. The

letters which normally occur most frequently, such as A, E and O, were each given six numbers in the key, and so on down to two numbers or even one.

Here is a sample key:—

A	=	07,	23,	39,	62,	70,	98
B	=	16,	43,	78			
C	=	00,	47,	75,	85		
D	=	15,	32,	59,	60		
E	=	04,	30,	38,	51,	73,	99
F	=	02,	54,	69			
G	=	13,	46,	66,	93		
H	=	11,	34,	37,	81,	92	
I	=	14,	25,	26,	63,	96	
J	=	03,	42,	89			
K	=	22,	77				
L	=	09,	44,	64,	97		
M	=	01,	57,	71			
N	=	33,	58,	74,	82,	88	
O	=	05,	24,	29,	53,	68,	91
P	=	35,	50,	67			
Q	=	10,	76				
R	=	06,	31,	55,	56,	83	
S	=	20,	52,	65,	79		
T	=	21,	48,	61,	80,	84	
U	=	12,	41,	86			
V	=	17,	40,	87			
W	=	08,	45,	94			
X	=	18					
Y	=	27,	90				
Z	=	28,	72				

Full stop = 19, 36, 49, 95

Thus, the message "Michael Collins is at Gresham Hotel" could be translated into:—

57144 73762 30447 50509 64263 32025
52072 11331 04653 42301 11292 13897

The "word" cipher, which the new system superseded for all important telegrams between Dublin and the provinces but which continued in use locally in each county area, was a much simpler affair. Take a word, say "Policeman," in which no letter is used more than once, then add the letters, in alphabetical order, not already used until there are thirteen, thus POLICEMANBDFG. Repeat the letter G, underneath the last letter of the line and continue in reverse until the alphabet is exhausted,

I and J being treated as one letter to compensate for the repetition of G. The result is:—

P O L I C E M A N B D F G

Z Y X W V U T S R Q K H G

the key, therefore, being:—

A=S, B=Q, C=V, D=K, I=W, J=W . .
Z=P.

Messages in code, using this system, were also sent in blocks of five letters, so a telegram might read:—

TWVFS UXVYX XWRAW ASMGN UAFST
FYMUX etc.

In addition to providing each change of cipher Jerry Maher, with whom I was in constant communication and whom I visited secretly two or three times weekly, passed on to me every piece of information which might be of interest to me as well as material for replies to queries frequently sent to me by Collins. He was invaluable to the Intelligence Department and devoted to Collins personally. A few weeks after I had established contact with Maher, Collins asked me to arrange a meeting with him in Dublin as he always liked to know personally everyone who worked for him, as far as that was possible. They met at the Coolavin Dairy, Talbot Street, and afterwards lunched, I don't remember where, with Liam Tobin, Tom Cullen and Gearoid O'Sullivan, the Adjutant General, who, of all his colleagues on G.H.Q. Staff, appeared to me to be closest to Collins. Maher returned to Naas completely dedicated to working for Collins who, when I next met him, told me of the excellent impression Maher had made on him.

A few months after my first meeting with Maher he told me that he had been sounding the Naas District Inspector's clerk, Constable Patrick Casey, and had found him to be most sympathetic with the Volunteers and willing to give any help he could. I soon met him and we became firm friends. He was able to provide me with information of local interest not immediately available to Maher, but his

greatest value was that he was assigned to Maher's duties in the County Inspector's office whenever Maher was absent on leave or through illness. It wasn't long before he was promoted to the rank of Sergeant—at about the same time as Maher declined an offer of promotion to Head Constable which would have resulted in his transfer from the C.I.'s office and a grievous loss to the Intelligence Department.

While he was D.I.'s clerk I often visited Casey's house at night, and even spent whole nights there copying documents—such as British Army instructions to be followed in the event of Martial Law being brought into force in the midlands—which Casey brought home in the evenings and replaced next morning. When I brought copies of the first of those documents to Collins he offered to come down to Naas at night to help me copy them but I persuaded him that it was quite unnecessary for him to take such a risk. It was then he told me of the now famous occasion when he spent a night in the headquarters of the Detective Division in Brunswick Street (now Pearse Street), without, of course, mentioning Ned Broy's name.

When Maher felt, towards the end of 1920, that he was becoming suspect and resigned from the R.I.C. on Collins's advice it was most fortunate that Casey was appointed to succeed him in the C.I.'s office and was able to give the same valuable service to G.H.Q. In March 1921 Casey himself apparently came under some suspicion for he was transferred on very short notice to Downpatrick where he continued, however, to serve Collins. On the disbandment of the R.I.C. after the passing of the Treaty he was, of course, anxious to retire from that portion of the Force in the Six Counties which then became the Royal Ulster Constabulary, but at Collins's request served on until finally released by him in April 1922. He eventually became a Superintendent in the Garda Síochána—his late entry into the

Garda through remaining on in the R.U.C. hindered his prospects of further promotion—and was serving in Ennis when he died in his prime some years later.

Jerry Maher joined the Garda Síochána on its foundation and became the first successor to his former superior officer, County Inspector Supple, as Chief Superintendent in charge of counties Kildare and Carlow. He died while still serving in the Gardai also. Collins had the highest regard for Maher and Casey both as men and as “sources of information.” They were splendid types of men who took grave risks to help the national cause. *Ar dheis laimh De go raibh siad araon.*

When I first started to work for Collins he gave me a couple of covering addresses in Dublin through which I sent him messages too urgent to await my weekly visits to him at Vaughan’s Hotel on Saturday nights, while he wrote to me direct through the post. Very soon, however, he introduced me to Sean O’Connell, a railway clerk at Kingsbridge station, and from then on all written messages between Collins and myself went through O’Connell. I found a very reliable man at Sallins station, James Lennon, the ticket collector, who handed letters for O’Connell to one of a small number of guards and conductors on main line trains whose names were supplied to me by O’Connell, and also received letters from them for me. This system worked perfectly up to my arrest on 15 January, 1921, and similar systems were, of course, in use on the other railway lines out of Dublin.

The R.I.C. also used the trains for courier work. The keyword for the old cipher system was always sent out from their headquarters on each change of word by telegram in the old code. This happened on an average once a month and continued up to the Treaty. On each change in the new “figure” cipher, however, the key reached each County Inspector by a much

more guarded and much slower method. A head constable or sergeant was sent out by train from each Dublin terminus with a sealed letter for each C.I. containing a copy of the new key and was met at the appropriate station—for County Kildare it was Sallins—by a messenger from the C.I. From Naas a copy of the new key would be on its way to Collins within a few hours of its arrival to be re-despatched by him immediately to his Brigade I.O.’s and special agents around the country. It even happened sometimes that Collins’s copy reached its destination before the original reached the local C.I. For instance when Lord Mayor MacSwiney’s office in Cork City Hall was searched on his arrest on 12 August, 1920, a copy of the new cipher key (intended for the Brigade I.O.) which had not yet come into use was found in his desk. It was, of course, cancelled immediately and replaced by another.

My work for Collins in County Kildare was not confined to relaying information supplied by Maher and Casey. I was not allowed by him to associate with the local Volunteers and the only man in the area who knew officially of my intelligence work was the local Battalion O.C., Tom Harris, for whom I often brought messages to and from G.H.Q. On Collins’s instructions I investigated privately the possibilities of carrying out various activities in the county. One job which I suggested was the disarming of a military patrol at Newbridge station, and Collins was particularly anxious that this should be carried out on the morning of Kevin Barry’s execution, 1 November, 1920, because Kevin’s “crime” was taking part in a similar job. It was to be carried out by local men under Tom Harris who came up to Dublin to discuss plans with Collins and Gearoid O’Sullivan; I was also present. However, owing to a change of plan by the British military at the Curragh the coup could not be attempted on that day and was later called off.

Raids for Government mails had not been carried out officially for a considerable time prior to late November, 1920, when Collins asked me to raid the night mail train from Cork occasionally and collect the "Castle" mailbag from the Post Office sorting van. The train stopped at almost every station and passed through County Kildare between 2 and 3 a.m. I carried out the raids about once a week on an average, usually accompanied by one or two trusted local Volunteers and with the full co-operation of the Post Office sorting staff, varying our attentions to the different stations of Sallins, Newbridge and Kildare. On the first raid I asked for and was handed No. 3 bag; on each subsequent visit it was handed to me the moment we appeared. Surprisingly the police made no attempt to prevent this activity of which they must have received reports, and it came to an end, as far as I was concerned, only on my arrest.

One of my visits to Vaughan's Hotel occurred on the night of Saturday, 20 November, 1920, the eve of Bloody Sunday. Actually I had not intended to go there that night and had no appointment with Collins but I found myself locked out, when I arrived half an hour or so after ten o'clock curfew at the hotel where I had arranged to stay, so I went along to Vaughan's where I knew Christy Harte, the "boots," waiter and general factotum, would let me in. When I arrived Christy said to me: "the Big Man (he could never bring himself to say the 'Big Fellow') and some of the other gentlemen are up in the smoke-room, and Mr. Beaslai and Mr. O'Connell and another young man are in the pantry under the stairs." I said, "I don't want to see Mr. C. tonight; I'll go down to the pantry." There I was introduced to Conor Clune who was conversing in Irish with Piaras Beaslai. Sean O'Connell explained to me aside that he was from Clare and that he had brought him to Vaughan's

to meet Beaslai of whom he was a great admirer.

About half an hour later Dick McKee came down the stairs from the smoke-room, went through a door almost opposite the pantry leading into a little back garden where he had left his bicycle and returned immediately pushing it towards the front door. He said "good-night lads!" to us as he passed and that was the last time we saw him alive. While he was collecting his bicycle we heard Collins, O'Sullivan, Diarmuid O'Hegarty, Rory O'Connor, Peadar Clancy and one or two others come down the stairs and go through the hall door. It could not have been more than a couple of minutes later when we heard a great commotion in the front hall and the sound of men running up the stairs over our heads to the empty smoke-room into which they dashed shouting "hands up!" Sean O'Connell looked out and exclaimed, "Christ, lads, the Tans." He and Beaslai went out by the back door and over a wall into the garden of Doctor Eustace's house, next door, where they spent a cold and uncomfortable few hours until dawn. Having nothing incriminating on me I decided to see the raid through. Clune, remarking "we can die for Ireland as well as anybody else," remained with me. He was wearing a *fáinne* which he took off and hid it in a corner of the pantry behind the skirting board. After a few minutes an auxiliary passed down from the hall and saw us. He turned back and asked someone "what about those two fellows under the stairs?" We were brought up to the dining room and lined up for interrogation with seven or eight other men who were staying in the hotel and none of whom I knew.

I didn't know him then but our interrogator, who was in army uniform, was the already notorious Captain Hardy, intelligence officer of F Company of the Auxiliaries. Each of us was searched, and

questioned in detail as to why we were there. I gave my correct name and address and said I had come to Dublin to visit friends in Clontarf, which was true, and had arrived a little earlier at the hotel to sleep there. Hardy pointed out that my name was not entered in the register but Christy Harte came to my rescue by saying: "that's my fault, sir, he's in No. 21 but I was too busy to put his name down." I had no luggage but in my pocket were found a clean collar and a toothbrush. Clune was questioned next and accused of being there for a meeting; Christy didn't know him and couldn't help when he said he was a hotel guest. When he searched him Hardy exclaimed: "this bloody fellow hasn't even got a toothbrush on him." He was placed under arrest. Another man, who gave his name as Scanlan, was also arrested; he was Billy Pilkington, C.O. of the Sligo Brigade, who was fortunate enough to arrive eventually at Arbour Hill Barracks from which he escaped ten days later. The arrest of a third man, who was in reality one of themselves, was very elaborately staged. Hardy produced a photograph with which they compared his face from all angles. Heads were nodded very knowingly and finally two Auxiliaries were sent up stairs to a bedroom to bring down his trunk, and he was taken away with the other two prisoners.

After the raid Christy told me the story. The Auxiliary, who gave his name as Edwards, had booked a room in the hotel a couple of days earlier. During that Saturday night his movements had aroused Christy's suspicions; he had gone to the public telephone in the hall twice after ten o'clock, and, shortly before eleven had gone out of the hotel, although it was then well after curfew time, and returned five minutes or so later. Christy immediately went to the smoke-room and told Collins he thought they should all leave at once as he felt something was going to happen very soon. Collins, who had great respect

for Christy's hunches, left immediately accompanied by all the others and the raiders found an empty room a couple of minutes later. Unfortunately McKee and Clancy were captured later that night and on the following day were murdered with Conor Clune in the Castle.

On that Saturday night I had no knowledge, of course, of the events planned to take place on the following morning. I learned of the Sunday morning executions from Sean Ó Murthuile when I came down to a late breakfast in Vaughan's. Later that morning, when returning from Mass in the Pro-Cathedral, I saw "Edwards" walking in O'Connell Street near the G.P.O.; I told Collins this when I returned to Vaughan's and found him there again with a few others. On the following day "Edwards" returned to take up residence in the hotel and remained for two or three weeks. About ten days after his return, I asked Collins, who knew all about him by now, what he intended doing about him and he replied "nothing, it would be too messy." Some weeks later, after my own arrest, I saw him again in the Castle, this time in Auxiliary uniform.

On the Wednesday after Bloody Sunday, I was in the city again, watching the removal of the remains of the fourteen British Intelligence men, who had been shot, to North Wall for embarkation to England. Gearoid O'Sullivan and Frank Thornton, who were among the large crowd looking on near O'Connell Bridge, came and asked me to get a couple of other Volunteers and go to King George V Hospital (now St. Bricin's) to claim the remains of Dick McKee and Peadar Clancy for removal to the Pro-Cathedral. I looked around and found two whom I knew, Seamus Brennan (the Tullamore Seamus) and a boy named Bernard Ryan. The three of us took a Phoenix Park tram from Nelson's Pillar and made our way to the mortuary at the hospital where the female

relatives of the two dead men had already arrived with hearses and carriages. McKee and Clancy were in coffins which were still uncovered. Only a few R.A.M.C. men were in attendance and I told the senior N.C.O. that we had come to claim the remains on behalf of the next-of-kin. We were asked no questions, and were allowed to view the faces of the two men before the coffins were covered. Both were marked with bruises and what appeared to be wounds made by bayonets or other pointed weapons; any blood caused by wounds had been washed off. The coffins were closed and the hearses and carriages, with the women, went away to the Pro-Cathedral. The remains of Conor Clune had been removed earlier to Co. Clare by his family.

Brennan, Ryan and I returned to the city as we had come, by tram. Poor Barney Ryan was hanged in Mountjoy prison on 13 March, 1921, for taking part in an attempted ambush in Drumcondra.

A couple of weeks after Bloody Sunday I was standing at the door of my lodgings in Poplar Square when my friend, Sergeant Maher, came past on his way home to dinner. He slowed as he passed me, and out of the corner of his mouth said "they're coming for you at four o'clock." A few minutes before four, I cycled out of town. At about six, when it was dark, I called at Maher's house and got a first hand account of the raid and search of my lodgings which was very thorough. Maher and his wife insisted that I remain as their guest, and I did so for about a week, going out only at night. I continued to visit Collins at Vaughan's and send him the usual messages through Sean O'Connell. On leaving the Maher house, I stayed with friends in Kildare, Newbridge and Ballymore-Eustace, raiding the mail trains and keeping in touch with Maher.

On Saturday, 8 January, 1921, Collins, for the first time ever, failed to keep our appoint-

ment at Vaughan's Hotel. On the following Saturday, 15 January, I came to Dublin again, joining a train at Newbridge. At Sallins, the next station, I showed myself to Jimmy Lennon who gave me three letters which he had just received from Dublin. Two were addressed to the local Battalion Adjutant and the third to "S.K. Naas"; I knew this was from Collins. I put the letters in my pocket to look at when I was alone. I went by train to the Royal Exchange Hotel in Parliament Street where I was known and in the little restaurant behind a curtain in the hall I ordered a late luncheon; it was then about three o'clock. While waiting for my meal I looked at the letters. The first two were from the Adjutant General's office, typed on official paper, and dealt with routine Volunteer matters; it was the first time to my knowledge that messages not from Collins personally had come through my own line of communication and I made a mental note to speak to the Adjutant General about it that night. The third letter was signed "M" and typed on plain paper. It ran something like this;

"Dear Sean,

I'm very sorry I couldn't turn up last Saturday night. Will you meet me on next Saturday at 8?"

Just as I had read this note I heard a voice say: "Put your hands up!" and looking up saw two Auxiliaries at the parting of the curtains with revolvers pointing at me. One asked "What's your name?" and just then a face appeared behind them which I recognised as that of the son of a Co. Kildare R.I.C. sergeant and I realised they already knew who I was. It was immediately obvious to me what had happened; the sergeant's son, who had been away from his home for some months and was said to have joined the Black and Tans, had spotted me arriving at Kingsbridge, followed me to the Exchange Hotel and then hurried around the corner into the Castle to report my presence there. The letters were seized

and I was hustled away into the Intelligence Room near the front gate of the Castle where my interrogation immediately began. It was conducted by Major King, officer commanding F Company of the Auxiliaries, who had just arrested me; Captain Hardy, whom I had met in Vaughan's Hotel eight weeks previously; and "Tiny", a six-foot-six Auxiliary officer whom I had also seen before.

They almost ignored the two letters from the Adjutant General's office, being convinced that the third was from Collins to whom I could lead them at eight o'clock if I could be so persuaded. I denied all knowledge of Collins and kept on repeating that my appointment was for Newbridge; on searching me they had found a return railway ticket and a cloakroom ticket for a bicycle issued there. The questions, punctuated by body blows, hair pulling and face slapping continued for a couple of hours without producing any satisfactory result, until Hardy finally suggested that my meeting with "M," whoever he was, was to take place at the Exchange Hotel. I was so relieved at this suggestion, and that Vaughan's was not mentioned, that I almost agreed. However, I strenuously denied at first that Hardy was right until, after a few more punches, I gave up denying and my silence convinced them that they were on the right track.

I was put into a military guardroom where I was given a mug of tea and a slice of bread, my first food since breakfast in Ballymore Eustace. At 7.45 King and the other two, now in mufti, came for me and brought me back to the Exchange Hotel. We were accompanied by a large number of Auxiliaries, also in mufti, who took up positions in small groups in doorways and shadows all around on both sides of Parliament Street. I was put standing alone in the open porch of the hotel entrance with instructions that when the man I was to meet came along I should shake hands with him—but with nobody else. King, Hardy

and a few others entered the hotel and took it over, allowing nobody to go out or use the telephone. I was, of course, carefully watched from inside and outside.

For almost two hours I stood in the porch waiting for "M," but, strangely, nobody tried to enter the hotel during all that time. At last, when it was almost ten o'clock and curfew time, a Dublin man, who had shared my lodgings in Naas for a while before I had to go on the run, passed with a girl and saw me. I tried to ignore him but he turned back with outstretched hand which I didn't take. In a trice we were surrounded and arrested, and marched off to the Castle. By a strange coincidence, a Dublin policeman who lived beside and knew my friend happened to be on duty on the Castle gate as we passed in with our escort; he followed and vouched for his "respectability" so he was soon let go. As for me, I was given some more of the earlier treatment for "leading them up the garden path," as one of them said, and finally I was taken to the Exchange Court guardroom—where McKee, Clancy and Clune had been killed—and allowed to retire. I felt sore, tired and hungry but not unhappy at the way things had gone so far.

The following day, Sunday, nothing happened. In the afternoon two Auxiliaries, on duty in the guardroom, took me out for a half-hour's walking exercise in the Castle yard. On Monday afternoon I was transferred by a military escort to Kilmainham Prison which contained a large number of Volunteer prisoners none of whom I had known before. One of the first I met told me his name was Peter Ennis; later he was superintendent in charge of the Dublin Detective Division. When he heard I had come from the Castle he asked: "how did you get on there?" I replied: "not too badly, what about you?" He put his fingers into his waistcoat pocket and took out seven or eight teeth, saying, with a laugh: "that's how I got on." I had already noticed

that several of his front teeth were missing. He had been interrogated by my friends, Hardy and company. He introduced me to Christy Carberry who had been arrested with him a couple of weeks earlier; Christy's face was still a mass of bruises and his eyes half-closed from his treatment in the Intelligence Room. I learned later that they were two of a party of five who had been surprised and captured at a meeting of the Dublin Brigade Intelligence Staff; Ennis was Brigade I.O. and Carberry one of the four Battalion I.O.'s.

Another man who bore marks on his face of his "interrogation" in the Castle was Bernard Stewart. I didn't know then that his real name was Ernie O'Malley. Another whom I met was the Capuchin priest, Father Dominic, who was awaiting the result of his courtmartial; he got a sentence of three years penal servitude and was transferred to England.

After a few days in Kilmainham I was told to pack up. After breakfast I was handed over to an Army sergeant and placed in the turret of an armoured car. I asked where I was being brought and was told: "you'll find out." Looking through the driving slits I could see after a while that we were approaching the Castle, which made me very apprehensive. This time, however, subtler means were used to obtain information from me about Collins. I was taken into the Dublin Command Army Headquarters where I was interviewed at length in a large comfortable office by a gentleman in mufti who was evidently somebody of importance. He had Collins's note before him and a scowling photograph of Mick taken from a Dail Eireann group which was a bad likeness of the man as he really looked. He talked about what a wonderful man Collins must be and how interesting it must be to know him intimately. I agreed and regretted I hadn't that privilege. We similarly discussed Mulcahy, with a like result. Finally he

dismissed me, promising we would meet again.

I was then put into a large cell near Ship Street gate which was close by. It was already occupied by three prisoners, a youth named John Noud, a young man, Vincent Fouvargue, and an oldish man named James Green, all strangers to me. Fouvargue was the most chatty of the three. He told me he was one of the Battalion I.O.'s caught with Ennis and Carberry. He brought the names of Volunteer leaders like Brugha, Mulcahy, O'Sullivan and, of course, Collins into our conversation often but not, I noticed on looking back on it much later, at a time when the others were near us. I had no suspicion of him then but fortunately talked only in generalities and gave him no information that could not be learned from the newspapers.

We were all moved together to Kilmainham Prison after a week. Soon after my return I had a surprise visit from Michael Noyk, the solicitor, who had been sent by Collins and whom I had met a few times in Vaughan's Hotel. He was allowed see me alone in my cell and I gave him my story for Collins up to then. A few days later I was brought to the Military Governor's office where the man who had last questioned me at the Castle awaited me. He just happened to be there and thought it would be nice to look me up and see how I was getting on since our first meeting. He brought the conversation naturally around to Collins and the other leaders—what kind of people they were and so forth. I replied that I would not know, at which he laughed: "of course you would." Later that morning Fouvargue came to me in the exercise yard and asked me: "were you called to the Governor's office today?" I said: "yes." "Funny", said he, "so was I and I have no idea why."

During that period it was usual for the Auxiliaries and the military to take prisoners as hostages in their lorries and tenders when going on raids or patrols, and on the

evening of 31 January Fouvargue was taken out as a hostage by a party of Auxiliaries. We read in the papers next day that the lorry was ambushed on the South Circular Road, and that when the occupants jumped down and chased their attackers their prisoner escaped. No such attack had, in fact, taken place. On 3 April, 1921 Fouvargue's body was found on a Middlesex golf course; he had been shot as a spy by London members of the Irish Volunteers. I met John Noud again in Mountjoy Prison shortly after Fouvargue's death. He told me then that he should have warned me at first about Fouvargue whom he had good reason to suspect, but, knowing nothing about me and fearing I might also be a wrong one, he decided to say nothing.

Shortly after Fouvargue's "escape" I got a shock one morning in the exercise yard when I saw the face of Rory O'Connor, Director of Engineering at G.H.Q., appear around the corner of the doorway leading to the yard. Knowing Rory well from frequent meetings in Vaughan's I went and had a short chat with him; he had arrived the night before without going through any unpleasantness in the Castle and evidently his importance was not appreciated. He asked me to tell Stewart he was there and wanted to speak to him which I did.

On the night of Monday, 14 February, two or three days after Rory's arrival, Kilmainham buzzed with excitement when it was discovered that three important prisoners had escaped during the evening—Ernie O'Malley, Simon Donnelly and Frank Teeling, who had already been sentenced to death for his part in the Bloody Sunday shootings and was certain to be hanged. An abortive attempt at escape, of which I knew nothing, had been made on the previous evening. Paddy Moran took part in that attempt but could not be persuaded to go on Monday evening as he now felt he would be letting down the witnesses for his defence at his courtmartial and was confident of an acquittal on the

charge of murder on Bloody Sunday. At about seven o'clock on the evening of the escape Moran came to my cell and told me Teeling and O'Malley and someone else were going to make a break. He asked me if I could get the soldier-warder on evening duty in our portion of the prison out of the way for a while and I said I thought I could. A section of the Welsh Regiment were on duty in Kilmainham jail at the time. The man concerned, whose name was Roper, had come on duty at 5 p.m. and had already told me that the previous day, Sunday, was his birthday, but as the public houses were open only during his time on duty he had postponed his birthday until Monday. When he came on duty that afternoon I saw that he had already begun to celebrate. When Moran had left me I saw Roper and asked him if he could post some letters for me which I had already written. He said "sure" and I gave him the letters and a few shillings for a drink in Paddy Doyle's across the road where he said he would be calling. His last words to me before he left were: "don't let anybody escape before I come back!"

When he returned more than an hour later the three escaped men were far away. He got a sentence of eight years as did another soldier who should have been on duty with him but absented himself for the entire evening. I felt badly, and still do at getting Roper into such serious trouble, but felt justified then by the fact that Teeling's life, and probably O'Malley's, had been saved. There was a sequel; in 1934, when I was Governor of Mountjoy prison, I received a letter from Roper from his home in Wales. He had served his full sentence, was unemployed, and wanted to join the Irish army. I spoke to Oscar Traynor, who had been a member of the prison visiting committee and was then Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence (he was Commanding Officer of the Dublin Brigade at the time of the escape) and sent him Roper's letter. He

explained that, not being an Irish national, Roper could not be accepted in our army, but promised that in the circumstances he would do his best to obtain a special grant for him. I believe that he succeeded.

Two days after the escape I was transferred during the night with about twenty others to Mountjoy prison where elaborate security arrangements had been made for our reception. Before leaving Kilmainham we were handcuffed in pairs; while this was being done Rory O'Connor came and stood beside me and we were handcuffed together. This gesture of protection from a senior officer and an older man is still one of my warmest memories. In Mountjoy we were lodged in the ground floor of C wing which had been converted into a minor fortress with barbed wire and sand bags. The normal prison staff had been withdrawn and replaced by armed Auxiliaries who carried out all the duties of prison staff in that ward until the Treaty was signed in December of that year. It was obvious that the Castle authorities were determined that there would be no further escapes of "murderers."

Less than four weeks later, on 14 March 1921, six of my fellow prisoners who had come from Kilmainham with me were hanged in Mountjoy, two at 6 a.m., two at 7 a.m. and two at 8 a.m. Patrick Moran and Thomas Whelan were executed for the Bloody Sunday shootings. The other four, Frank Flood, Patrick Doyle, Thomas Bryan and Bernard Ryan (whom I had known outside) had been caught at the scene of an attempted ambush in Drumcondra. They were in Kilmainham prison at the time of the escape but were locked away in a different part of the prison and could not be reached. Whelan, although charged with murder on Bloody Sunday, appeared to have an excellent chance of acquittal.

That was a very black day in Mountjoy which I shall never forget. One of my most poignant recollections is seeing through the "spy-hole" of my cell door six empty coffins being brought up from the carpenters' workshop in the basement of C wing.

My own court-martial had taken place about a fortnight before the executions when I was charged with possession of seditious documents; the note from Collins was not of course one of the exhibits. Major King was not present to give evidence of arrest; this was done by the Auxiliary who was with him. King himself was at that time in custody charged with the murder of two Dublin Volunteers named Kennedy and Murphy. Although the evidence against him was strong nobody was surprised when on his trial by court-martial he was acquitted. On the afternoon of the executions I was visited by a British army officer who served me with a document stating that I had been sentenced to one year's imprisonment, which sentence had been duly confirmed by the competent military authority. I was forthwith transferred into D wing to join fifty or sixty other sentenced men where I remained until the general release in December.

A week or so after my arrival in D wing a warder came into my cell and handed me a letter which he told me Collins had given him for me in Kirwan's of Parnell Street the night before. Collins had written to congratulate me on my very light sentence, and then went on humorously to warn me that, of course, I would be interned for two or three years more when it was finished. That letter, which was my last direct communication from him, rounded off the intimate association with him which had started eighteen months earlier.

Michael Collins's Squad

By

WILLIAM J. STAPLETON

FIELD Marshal, Viscount French, England's Lord Lieutenant in Ireland, determined to end the struggle that Irishmen were then making to free their country from the unjust domination of England, a foreign power; to this end he embarked on a reign of terror in the country to intimidate not only the Volunteers but the civilian population. During nine months in 1919 the British-censored press of that time reported raids on private houses to the number of five thousand, five hundred and eighty-eight and this was not the full number.

In September, Fermoy was subjected to a large raid by British forces and sacked. In November, Cork was subjected to a still larger raid of looting, burnings and destruction in its main streets.

The chief organisations, *Sinn Féin*, the Irish Volunteers, *Cumann na mBan* and the Gaelic League were proscribed, long sentences of imprisonment were being meted out to nationally-minded Irishmen for the most trivial manifestations of national sentiment.

Michael Collins, who was Minister for Finance in the Dail, was at the same time

director of organisation of the Intelligence Service in the Irish Volunteers, and was establishing a top-class general headquarters intelligence service under his own command, including a sizeable and most effective counter-espionage system. In 1920 he organised and added a group of specially selected volunteers drawn from the different company units of the Dublin Brigade to counteract the work of the British "G" Division of the police and the British spy organisation in Dublin. Some of these men had been, like myself, out in 1916, some were officers in their own Volunteer corps and others were ordinary rank and file Irish Volunteers. This body, of about five, were on a part-time basis. It was increased in a short time to twelve. They became known as the "Squad" and were placed on a whole time work.

Mick McDonald, a Wicklow man, organised it on a firm footing before leaving on important assignments outside Dublin. Mick was a step-brother of one of the leading squad members—Tom Kehoe. I joined in September, 1920. The Squad: Tom Kehoe, Jim Conroy, Frank

Bolster, Paddy Griffin, Ben Byrne, Johnny Dunne, Jim Slattery, Mick Kennedy, Eddie Byrne, Vinny Byrne, Mick Reilly, Bill Stapleton. Also included was Pat McCrea, part-time Squad driver.

The "squad" being whole-time had to be available day and night. They took their instructions directly from General Headquarters intelligence section which Michael Collins himself directed and controlled.

I came to be a member of the "squad" when I was told by my company captain, Tommy Kilcoyne (I was a lieutenant in B company, Second battalion at this time) to report to Oriel House, Seville Place, in September, 1920, where I would be interviewed for a special assignment, I had a shrewd idea what this meant and I remember feeling elated at what I hoped would be a real opportunity to carry the war into the enemy's lines. There I met the chiefs of the Intelligence unit—Liam Tobin, Tom Cullen, Frank Thornton, Tom Kehoe and a few others whom I knew. Later Michael Collins came along.

They were all friendly and very much at their ease. They spoke to me in a general way and seemed to know all about my previous Volunteer experience, including that in pre-1916 and during 1916. Without delay I was told that I had been selected to join general headquarters Squad which was being increased to twelve and put on a full time basis.

The work of the squad was briefly explained and what was expected of its members. The meeting was very friendly and I was given the option of thinking over the proposal.

Without delay I expressed my willingness to join and be available on a twenty-four hour basis. I remember feeling very honoured and happy that I was being given the chance to become more actively engaged in the war. Finally, I was told that a small subsistence allowance of four pounds, ten shillings per week would be paid to each member and certain sleeping

quarters were available in various private houses of the city. We were expected to keep together in groups at these quarters nightly so that we could easily be called upon. We were advised to live away from home.

It was explained that no special disguises were necessary except to dress and act like ordinary Dublin working men or clerks going to and from work in offices or other places of employment. Each of us was advised to carry simple identification papers such as Trade Union cards—properly entered up—documents that would stand scrutiny to show that the bearer was a clerical officer for instance, or worked in a solicitor's office and so on. Each was left to decide on what he could easily explain and talk about.

The squad was made up of clerks, tradesmen, general workers and labourers.

Our first meeting place was Oriel House which had been converted by the owner into rooms for Society meetings, practice rooms for the Saint Laurence O'Toole Pipe Band and so on. Eventually we left this as it had been used as a decoy for a British raid and was suspect. We moved about three or four hundred yards to the school house in Oriel Street where we remained for some time. This had serious drawbacks as it was deep in the dockland on the north side. It was found that valuable time was lost getting into town, or across town for an assignment and getting back. In addition its location stretched the lines of communication too far.

Eventually a meeting place was secured for us right in the centre of the city, in Upper Abbey Street, a few hundred yards from Dublin Castle and the main centres of the city. This had been a contractor's business premises and was entered under a stone arch-way fitted with gates. At the rear were some sheds and lofts which had apparently been used by the contractor as stores. This place is still intact to-day in its

original form except that there is no name or title on the gates. Upper Abbey Street even to-day is well known for its small shops dealing in timber, plumbing and general house repairs. It is little changed now except to have become a bit more frowsy.

Squad man, Vinny Byrne, was a carpenter and cabinet-maker by trade and with General Headquarters' blessing we secured carpenter's tools, some timber, and decided to equip a small office with a rough desk, some calendars and building literature.

I painted on the gates in large white letters on a brown ground: GEO. MORELAND, CABINET-MAKER. There we came together daily dressed in our white aprons—under which we were fully armed—and engaged in amateur carpentry under Vinny's expert instruction.

It was a perfect set-up and if we had been legitimate contractors we would have done well, judging by the number of enquiries received. Our "front" was perfectly maintained as Vinny Byrne met the prospective customers and discussed their requirements in detail, took notes, promised to submit an estimate but pointed out, rather sadly, that due to pressure of work he could not promise when the job could be started. On hearing this the customers invariably said "thank you!" and left.

There were occasions when the squad happened to be in the vicinity when Mick Collins moved, as he almost always did, on foot from one place to another. We would keep a protective eye on him, very often unknown to him, until he was well clear. This occurred a few times when Mick was arriving or leaving his Finance office, 16A Mary Street, parallel to Abbey Street.

I can recall one day when I was returning to Abbey Street by way of Mary Street from Great Denmark Street, when I saw the "Big Fellow", as we called Collins, smiling hugely and walking smartly along Mary Street towards Nelson's Pillar. There

was some commotion in Mary Street which I saw was caused by a British raiding party jumping out of an open Crossley tender and rushing into Mick Collins's Finance office which he had just left taking with him all the important documents. I feel I must state here to scotch the idea that we were Collins's personal body-guard, that this was not the case.

It was the easiest thing in the world for any of us to see Collins or Liam Tobin either in Pearse Street or at Vaughan's Hotel or in any street by arrangement. He and his intelligence officers were as close as could be to the squad and were always approachable. The squad and the intelligence officers were deeply devoted to their exceptional "boss"—The Big Fellow.

The squad did not receive any special training beyond what we had acquired in the Volunteers. We did, however, each of us practice concealing a gun or guns on our persons, quick drawing and aiming.

We would ask one another to observe our individual deftness in drawing, cocking and levelling a gun and so on; this together with the experience of actual action or combat made us highly proficient. If ever we had a few spare rounds we would get a bit of quiet practice in a remote part of County Dublin.

Our chief function was the extermination of British spies and informers. Two squad men in turn would carry out this work with an intelligence officer whose part it was to point out clearly and distinctly by a pre-arranged signal the spy concerned. The remainder of the squad would fan out to cover the retreat of the two.

These exterminations were carried out mainly on the Dublin streets in broad daylight, our subsequent escape was effected by mingling with any people standing or gaping about; a swift foot ensured safe retreat. Rarely were cars used.

An example of one action will illustrate the method. Three of Inspector Igoe's picked men were reported to leave Dublin

Castle for luncheon about 12.30 p.m. daily. They came along Parliament Street towards the Quays. (The squad had been watching for Igoe and his men for some time). We were ordered to shoot these three and we were in Essex Street West when we received the signal from an intelligence officer. The three men, looking I thought rather weary, were walking along the footpath towards Capel Street and when they reached the top of Essex Street we fired on them and they fell. A crowd of people appeared from a side street leading to Saints Michael and John's Church and were approaching Parliament Street. We pocketed our guns and ran towards them, as firing started from the sentry on duty at the City Hall, shouting, as we ran; "Oh! don't go up there! People are shooting one another". They paused and turned back and we mingled with them and ran on to the quayside, over the Father Mathew Bridge; we were back in Geo. Moreland's in a matter of minutes handling our pieces of timber as though we had never left the place. This presence of mind was something we all seemed to be able to produce at the right moment.

Two actions in which the squad took some pride and satisfaction were the elimination of a British spy in Wicklow Street who was in fact a "centre" for information. The other was the disposal of a person near Gloucester Diamond. He it was who led the raiding party that identified Dick McKee, Peadar Clancy and Conor Clune who were shot in cold blood in the day-room of Dublin Castle police station without trial and contrary to all the laws of God and man.

There were also, of course, some failures; in spite of the excellent intelligence section there were many weary days without any action. This inaction took all of our courage and faith in Michael Collins and our desire of freedom to keep us going. Many were the times that for days we tramped the streets of Dublin looking for our target and

waiting the signal of our intelligence officers. This was made particularly dangerous and difficult because of an increase in British street foot patrols who could hold up everyone in the street and search them. We always travelled armed, an offence for which any penalty might be inflicted. The prospect of shooting it out with several soldiers armed with rifles did not offer much chance of success. In spite of this added risk our work continued the same as ever.

There can be no doubt but that the liquidation of so many of the British intelligence personnel greatly restricted their ability to capture Volunteer leaders and this prevented their being forewarned about our ambush and raiding plans.

In a kind of desperation they decided to muster a unit of their own along the lines of the squad. For this purpose they transferred from Galway an able and, as we discovered later, a brave R.I.C. officer named Igoe to take charge of about twelve policemen, picked, daring men who were likely to be able to recognise important Volunteers and squad men. They wore civilian clothes and were always elegantly attired. The appearance of this unit in Dublin greatly increased the work of the squad and also made it more perilous.

We had descriptions of some of Igoe's men and searched the city with the intelligence officers, looking for them. We were well armed, even with some hand grenades. We did not succeed in identifying them though we had clues; they were strangers and they were well dressed. Igoe none of us knew. Headquarters decided to send to Galway for a Volunteer from the locality from which Igoe hailed. They sent up a man named Sweeney Newell and G.H.Q. incorporated him into the intelligence staff and introduced him to us. He was a brave man who fully realised that he was to be used as a bait to catch Igoe.

We spent days and weeks moving about the city on the heels of the intelligence officers in search of Igoe and his men, with



l. to r. Mick O'Donnell, Tom Kehoe, Vincent Byrne, Paddy Daly, Jim Slattery.

little success. Then one morning we were alerted that Igoe and his men were leaving Dublin Castle and going along Dame Street. Immediately we left our carpenter's shop, went in twos at intervals over Capel Street Bridge into Essex Street with a pre-arranged plan to move towards Dame Street along different side streets that led to it. Charlie Dalton went ahead of us with Sweeney Newell who would identify our quarry.

Vinny Byrne and I went up Anglesea Street while the others moved up by the other short streets connecting with Dame Street. Our walk was casual though we were alert and careful at the same time. At the top of Anglesea Street we stopped to let some traffic pass before crossing to Trinity Street *en route* for Grafton Street and Saint Stephen's Green as our orders were. As we looked left we saw Dalton and Sweeney Newell talking to a couple of well-dressed men. We crossed the street ready for action and when we looked again towards the group we saw Dalton moving away. We moved on towards the Green.

We heard later that Igoe was one of the men in the party. He gave Dalton orders to move off but held Sweeney Newell and kept him in conversation until they reached the Four Courts. There he said to him: "All right, Sweeney, I'm surprised to see you in Dublin. I hope you get the job you are after." Sweeney Newell had said he was in Dublin looking for a job.

Sweeney crossed the quays to the Liffey side of the street. Igoe or his pal fired on him and wounded him badly about the hip and legs. A police car that may have been shadowing Igoe took him to the Royal Hospital where he was kept under guard.

The report of the incident in the evening paper ran something like this: "A well-known wanted rebel, who was on the run, was recognised by Crown Forces near the Four Courts to-day. He was called on to halt but started to run, seeming to fumble to draw a gun. The soldiers fired on him and wounded him slightly. He was taken to Mountjoy jail." Sweeney was so badly wounded that he never again walked.

ATTEMPTED RESCUE OF SEAN McKEOWN TYPICAL SQUAD ACTION

I was in Aughrim Street, early on a warm, Saturday morning in May, 1921, and there were only a few people about. I was dressed in blue dungarees, the legs of which could be seen below the light waterproof coat I was wearing. What could not be seen was the belt and holster, with my short Webley .45 in it, around my waist. A picket party of Volunteers and Squad members were there similarly dressed to give the impression that we were Corporation employees waiting to go to work in the Cattle Market. I walked across the road to the iron barred gates of the Cattle Market and looked inside. The market looked wet and clean. I looked around at the remainder of our party, some of whom were walking down the street, others coming out of the public lavatory opposite, and I felt quite happy that they did look like market workers waiting to start work, which, indeed, they were, but it was work of another kind, spectacular and dangerous work.

Paddy Daly, who was in charge of the main party, was lolling against a wall at the top of Aughrim Street near the North Circular Road, as if waiting to meet somebody. He looked quite inconspicuous but I could see that he was intently staring across the North Circular Road and I knew what he was staring at, as did the others. He was watching the top window of the house immediately adjoining and overlooking the yard of the Dublin abattoir. The blind was down on this window. If this blind went up it was a signal that the crew of the British armoured car, which was in the Abbatoir yard to collect the daily meat for the barracks, had got out of the car; it would also be the signal for us to move into the yard, each group to do its allotted work. My group was to capture

and drive away the armoured car. This was our third morning waiting for the signal, and we wondered if "the job" would be done at all.

There had been, Pat McCrea told me, meetings a short time before, in the squad hide-out in Abbey Street. I was not present for the simple reason that I was a prisoner in Arbour Hill prison and had been there for over four weeks under a false name, and had succeeded in bluffing my way out under the same false name. I had just reported back to the squad in time for this important operation. Pat McCrea had greeted me with open arms and without delay a meeting was held and I was thoroughly briefed. Sean McKeown, the famous "Blacksmith of Ballinalee," had been wounded and captured some time previously and was now in Mountjoy prison, awaiting trial, the outcome of which was expected to be sentence of death.

Briefly, the plan was to capture an armoured car, man it with members of the squad dressed as an armoured car crew, two of our party to be in British officers' uniforms, then proceed to Mountjoy, where, with forged papers authorising the transfer of Sean McKeown to Dublin Castle, we would enter the prison and escort Sean out of the prison to freedom. The foregoing simple plan necessitated careful detailed planning, timing and anticipation of possible reaction at Mountjoy prison. First of all, however, we had to capture an armoured car, equipped with machine guns, and place a crew within it, fully trained to defend their mobile fort. I must admit it sounded a bit ridiculous to me, but I, like all of the squad and G.H.Q. Intelligence, had faith in Mick Collins and his planning. He had, by good planning and anticipation of British reaction, piloted

us through many a hazardous operation successfully in the past.

The house immediately adjoining and overlooking the main yard of the abbatoir was occupied by Michael Lynch, O.C. Fingal Brigade, I.R.A., supervisor of the abbatoir. He had been out in 1916; a reliable, dependable man. He had reported to G.H.Q. Intelligence that an armoured car daily escorted the army lorries to and from the abbatoir, which collected the meat rations for the city military barracks, including the nearby Marlboro' Barracks. Michael Lynch had noticed from an upper window of his house that sometimes the whole crew got out of the car and went inside the building to smoke and watch the butchers at work. At other times, the driver and perhaps one of the crew remained with the car. An important aspect on this occasion was that the car was turned round facing the main entrance, ready to leave, when the crew got out, driver and all.

The plan was direct and straightforward. We were divided into two groups. The first was to capture and man the armoured car as follows:— driver, assistant driver and two machine gunners; to these was added a fifth, Tom Kehoe, a squad member, renowned for his coolness, courage and initiative in any dangerous situation. Pat was to be driver; he was the number one G.H.Q. driver and was famous for courage and for being able to drive efficiently any make of car, not a common thing then, when cars were very few. I had been trained to drive by Pat and was to be the assistant driver while John Caffrey and Peter Gough, who had been trained as gunners in the Volunteers, were the machine-gunners. The two officers were Emmet Dalton, a G.H.Q. military instructor, and Joe Leonard. These were to be picked up at Hanlon's Corner, North Circular Road, if and when we captured the car. So here we were, the third morning, waiting for the signal which would indicate

that the crew had left the armoured car.

I moved down Aughrim Street a bit and crossed the road, looking up towards Paddy Daly's position at the North Circular Road corner. He was still lolling against the wall looking across at the house. It seemed as if we would have to come another day when suddenly Paddy Daly was waving his arms and ran to meet us as we moved rapidly up the street. He called "The blind has gone up! Come on, lads, fast!"

Pat McCrea, myself, Tom Kehoe, Sean Caffrey and Peter Gough reached the corner very fast, as did the covering party. We crossed the road and went up the narrow entrance to the abbatoir and through the open gate into the yard. There was the armoured car, silent and inert and no sign of anybody near it, with the doors shut. On seeing the armoured car I had a feeling of keen disappointment to note that it was a big heavily armoured "Peerless" model car with solid rubber tyres; it was not the fast moving "whippet" type with pneumatic tyres which ensured snappy mobility and swift turning, which I had been expecting.

Pat and I reached the car and tried to open the door farthest from the building. It was on a catch lock; we moved to the opposite side, at the gable wall of the building. Around the corner came the driver. We promptly held him up and disarmed him. We got him to open the car and Pat got in and was using the torch he had brought along, looking for the self-starter, as it was dark inside. The driver said that the car would have to be swung as the self-starter was jammed. We made him swing the car. Pat took over when the car started. He tried on the driver's hat but it was too small for him and he passed it to me. It fitted me and I kept it on. We had thrown off our coats and really looked the same as the real crew. We told the driver to stand against the gable wall of the building with his hands above his head resting on

it. The engine was revving up nicely. Then we heard shooting inside the abbatoir building where apparently some resistance was put up by the remainder of the crew.

I jumped into the car beside Pat. Tom Kehoe was standing up between the two gunners, and we drove away through the main gate, past Jimmy Conroy and some others of the party, as the shooting continued inside the building. We drove down the North Circular Road towards Hanlon's Corner. I opened the port hole beside me and got ready to put my handkerchief out, as the agreed signal for Emmet Dalton and Joe Leonard to indicate that we had captured the car. This signal was necessary as it was not possible to know from the outside who or how many was manning an armoured car.

We slowed up as we neared the corner, where we could see Emmet and Joe resplendent in their British officers' uniforms; they had changed in the house of Teresa Shane nearby. I pushed my handkerchief through the port hole as Pat slowed the car and Emmet and Joe were in like a shot. It was a tight squeeze with seven of us.

Trundling past Doyle's Corner, some men who had been standing around moved away fast, apparently expecting a raid or hold-up of pedestrians. The car was getting very warm, sweat was running down Pat's smiling face and I was nearly as bad myself. Pat seemed to be in perfect control of the car. Joe Leonard was sitting between the legs of the gunners and Emmet was sitting on my lap. We drove fairly fast over Blackquire Bridge and down the Circular Road to the avenue leading to the main gate of the prison, but we had to slow up because of the crowd of women, children and some men, who were gathered at the prison gates. Many had parcels which they were trying to hand in for their relatives imprisoned in the jail; many others were trying to find out if their absent fathers or brothers were inside.

There was booing as the armoured car approached and this increased in tempo as Emmet and Joe got out of the car and pushed their way through the crowd to the wicket gate and rang the bell.

A necessary part of the plan was to ensure, in case of discovery, a clear line of retreat from the prison for the car and its crew. There are three gates in the arched entrance of Mountjoy prison. The first, or outer gate, is an iron-shod, heavily-studded one in two sections, with a wicket gate and grill set in the outer section. Inside are two iron-barred gates about eighteen feet or so apart, reaching to the arched roof. The drill for vehicles entering the prison was to allow them into the first section, then close the main gate behind them before allowing them into the second section, and so on into the prison yard. In the yard an armed sentry was on duty, who stood with his rifle at the ready covering any vehicle, and the main entrance, until the three gates were closed. However, these prison precautions had not been overlooked by Michael Collins and he set out the following simple plan.

The crowd of men and women outside the jail with parcels of food for their relatives inside would keep banging on the wicket gate pressing the warder to take parcels to their husbands or sons inside. This warder had the three keys of the gates and part of our plan to ensure a safe retreat out of the prison was to secure these keys at the right moment—the moment we had Sean McKeown safe in the armoured car. Mingling with the large crowd of people on this morning and indeed for the two previous mornings, were three members of the I.R.A., two men and a girl. They were squad member Frank Bolster, Tom Walsh of my own "B" company, Second Battalion and Áine Malone, a member of *Cumann na mBan*, she was in fact a sister of Lieutenant Malone, who had been killed in the heroic defence of Clanwilliam House, Mount Street Bridge, in 1916.

Their part in the plan was to rush to the wicket gate and prevent its being shut, after the main gate closed on the armoured car. A mock parcel was to be pushed to the warder for a prisoner, the parcel, however, was to have neither name nor address on it. The warder was to be asked for a pencil and thus delayed in shutting the gate. This ruse would enable the trio to observe what was happening inside the yard and help to hold open a line of retreat for the armoured car and its "crew." As it turned out, this detail of planning saved the lives of the crew of the armoured car and ensured their escape. Again it was Michael Collins's foresight that saved the cream of G.H.Q. squad from being captured, or more likely killed, within Mountjoy prison. This would have had had a demoralising effect on the I.R.A. in Dublin.

The two "British officers" deceived the gate-keeper completely and he opened the main gate and we entered the first section, then the second and then the third section. We were then virtually prisoners in the prison yard.

The sentry stood to attention when Dalton and Leonard got out of the car and entered the main hall of the jail to present their "orders" for the transfer of McKeown. Pat then turned the car facing the gates which were locked in front of us. The sentry sloped arms and moved across the gate on his usual beat. He was very much on duty and to this day I feel he was suspicious and sensed that there was something amiss. He was watching the gate intently, just as I, in my dungarees and khaki beret, was watching him. Suddenly shooting started inside the prison. Frank and Tom at the wicket in the front gate had their guns drawn and were forcing the warder back. The sentry fired a shot and I heard Walsh cry out. Someone had unfortunately to deal with the sentry. Walsh and Bolster opened the three gates. Emmet Dalton and Joe

Leonard came running out of the prison, turned round and blazed several shots along the prison corridor. Joe Leonard and Tom Kehoe jumped into the car while Emmet Dalton hopped on to the back and continued firing into the prison corridor. I picked up the sentry's rifle with fixed bayonet and got into the car with it.

The operation took only a matter of minutes, but it seemed a long time before we got out of the prison, down the avenue, and on to the main road.

Although we had failed in our errand, it was through no fault of ours. The prison routine on which the plan was based, and which had been in operation for some time, had been suddenly altered on the day before we captured the car. The details of this change we heard only long afterwards.

We drove off down the North Circular Road to North Richmond Street Schools where Joe Hyland, Collins's driver, was to be waiting to take McKeown away in his taxi. As we neared the school we could see the taxi and Joe opening the doors. Emmet Dalton and Joe Leonard, still in their British officers' uniforms, got out and into Joe's car which drove away. After we dropped our officers we suddenly ran into a section of the road that was being repaired and we were nearly bogged down. The big solid wheels slipped and skidded, but Pat McCrea's coolness and good driving took us on to the firm road section and we turned left for Fairview with the intention of completing the last phase of the general plan—to hide the armoured car in a haybarn on a farm of a trusted friend between Malahide and Swords. We never thought that we may have been pursued and the strange thing is that, as far as we know, we were not followed. We were rather glum and disappointed, we had not rescued McKeown. We could not at that stage appreciate the enormous moral effect the action would have on the country, generally. We drove on through Fairview,

hardly a word was spoken. The interior of the car was getting hotter and hotter and we opened the turret to let in some air. We turned up the Malahide Road with its smooth surface and steady incline. The engine began to splutter and backfire. The big smooth solid-tyred wheels were skidding. Pat slowed down and went through the gears from low up, in a slow change to prevent the car jerking. We got as far as midway between the upper and lower gates of what is now Clontarf Golf Club. The heat inside was stifling. The engine spluttered and backfired and slowly shuddered to a halt. I looked around at Pat and the two gunners. The sweat was running down our faces. We got out on the road and, gasping, walked around the car. It was then and only then that we noticed that the heavy steel plate protecting the radiator was shut tight against it and must have been so since we had captured the car nearly two hours previously. As a result of the radiator plate being closed when the engine was running, the engine

had overheated and stopped. We could not get it to start again.

We decided after a short discussion to strip the machine guns from their mountings, set fire to the engine of the car and make our escape. We fired a few shots into the carburettor and dynamo and flung a match into the flowing petrol from the burst fuel pipes.

Tom Kehoe and Pat McCrea hiked across the fields to the house nearby where Tommy Ennis, Second Battalion commandant lived, while Tom Walsh, Sean Caffrey and myself helped to carry away the two machine guns, and the Lee Enfield rifle taken from the inside of Mountjoy prison. We crossed several fields until we found a suitable culvert near Coolock where we hid the arms.

Three or four hours later, and on instructions from Oscar Traynor, I went to see Paddy McDonnell of Seville Place and in his flat-bottomed horse-drawn cart we collected the arms and brought them back to his dump.



British forces raid Sinn Féin headquarters at No. 6 Harcourt Street, Dublin.

The author writes his personal recollection of the setting up and procedure of the Irish Republican Courts, which were mooted in 1919 and began operating in 1920. Our article by a man who himself professionally conducted many of the sittings of the courts in several towns has the stamp of authenticity. Similar courts functioned throughout the entire country with a success that merited for them universal respect and esteem. The adroit handling by the Irish judges of opposition to the courts on the part of Crown Forces adds further fascination to a story of unpredictable success.

THE REPUBLICAN COURTS

By

CONOR A. MAGUIRE

THE idea of attempting to take over the administration of justice from the established courts was first mooted in 1919 and took definite shape in the beginning of 1920. The idea was to set up arbitration tribunals to which litigants would submit their disputes. Dail Éireann gave sanction to this course of action, preferring not to challenge the courts directly for fear of suppression. Behind it also was the belief that as arbitration was a recognised procedure under the British system, the authorities would hesitate to use force to prevent arbitration tribunals from function-

ing. We, in County Mayo, were the first to organize a system of tribunals to deal with civil disputes. To our surprise we found it comparatively easy to persuade litigants and solicitors to bring their cases before the new tribunals. Before a case was opened, the practice was to have a form of agreement accepting arbitration signed by the parties. These tribunals quickly became known as *Sinn Féin* Courts. So many cases came forward that regular sittings of parish courts were arranged, each with their justices and clerks. The *Comhairle Ceanntair* in each of the four Mayo constituencies

quickly found that it was necessary to establish district courts presided over by a solicitor to deal with cases above the parish court jurisdiction. It happened that in each area there were solicitors who, being active supporters of *Sinn Féin*, were ready and willing to preside over courts in each of the four areas. In North Mayo there was P. J. Rutledge, T.D.; in East Mayo, Tomás MacCamhthaoil, and in South Mayo, myself. None of us sat in his own area.

Gradually, there was a takeover of the business of the petty sessions and the county courts. The pretence that the courts were ordinary arbitration tribunals was, however, soon abandoned. Except for the absence of judicial robes, the courts were carried on exactly as were our opposite numbers of the established British system.

By the spring of 1920 the courts were functioning quite smoothly, not alone in Mayo, but in Clare and Galway as well. They were accepted as the normal venue for civil business. So much was this so that we began to take over some of the criminal business. It was quite amazing that the Dublin Castle's British authorities ignored our activities for so long.

We, furthermore, added to the ordinary jurisdictions, which the "enemy" courts exercised, by dealing with agrarian disputes in a constructive way. Where such disputes arose, instead of arresting or punishing the claimants who were seeking to have estates divided up to relieve congestion, we invited the agitators to bring their claims before our courts. In this way, the *Sinn Féin* courts often brought about agreement between landlords and tenants, and landless men.

After a short time, however, there arose a case which was to put the whole system to a searching test. Near Kilmaine, in South Mayo, two land-owners occupied each holding of roughly fifty to sixty acres. These lands were under the control of the land judge's court. On the same estate were a number of tenants whose holdings were small and uneconomical. An agitation in

which the recognised forms of boycott, threat and intimidation were used was started by the small holders. Their objective was to compel a division of the two larger holdings amongst them. I was engaged as solicitor for the claimants. My clients readily agreed that the dispute should be submitted to the *Sinn Féin* district court. The two tenants of the larger holdings were requested to agree with this course. They refused. Things looked bad until the local parish priest, Father Martin Healy, paid me a visit. He explained that the two men against whom the agitation was directed were unwilling to submit to the arbitration of a local tribunal. He stated, however, that if Arthur Griffith would send down arbitrators from Dublin they would submit the case to them. I thought this proposal commendably reasonable. I travelled to Dublin and put the problem before Arthur Griffith. During the discussion it became evident that Mr. Griffith hesitated because he was afraid that the proposed tribunal would not be able to enforce a decision if it should prove unfavourable to the agitators. I stated my belief that the I.R.A. police would be able to do so. I realised, of course, that it was a gamble upon which the future of the courts in the west and, perhaps, elsewhere turned. Arthur Griffith eventually agreed to do as suggested. The Cabinet sent down Kevin O'Shiel, B.L.—later Mr. Commissioner O'Shiel—and the late Art O'Connor who subsequently was Minister for Lands in the Republican Government. The venue for the hearing was the town hall, Ballinrobe. The court sat on 17 May, 1920. Public interest was aroused and when the arbitrators sat, the hall was packed. At the last moment there was a hitch which seemed likely to upset our plans. As the court was about to begin, the solicitor who had been acting for the two large holders decided that he would not appear in court, because of his fear that the land judge (Judge Ross) would have him struck off the rolls. The

situation was unexpectedly saved at the last moment when Father Healy offered to plead the case for the landowners. I raised no objection. It was an exciting day. The proceedings were watched from a distance by members of the R.I.C. who did not, however, interfere. The hearing went on in due solemnity and was fully reported in the newspapers. One leading newspaper referred to the proceedings as 'a monstrous usurpation of the administration of justice'. Judgment was given in favour of the two owners who had been attacked. My clients, despite my advice, refused to accept the decision. The I.R.A. police, however, under the orders of Commandant Tom Maguire, seized the sons of some of the most defiant at night and took them away to an unknown destination; in fact, an island on Lough Corrib. After a week's detention they gave in. They and their friends promised obedience and, on promise being given through me that no further agitation would take place in the locality, they were allowed to go home. The result was that the courts became firmly established. Their success made it possible to bring about a boycott of the official county courts, and later the assizes at Castlebar. Warnings were issued and an order made that no litigant was to attend these courts. The boycott of the July assizes was spectacularly effective. In order to see that litigants would not attend, the roads leading to Castlebar were patrolled by the I.R.A. All persons going in that direction from any part of the county were closely questioned and were only allowed to proceed on showing that they were not going to the courts. When the judges sat they found that their lists had almost completely collapsed. Practically no business came before them.

Some time earlier, I was asked to take Mr. John Steele, the well-known correspondent of *The Chicago Tribune*, to see a *Sinn Féin* court at work. With him I motored from Dublin by devious ways to Ballinasloe, where I had learned that a

court was to be held. When we got to Ballinasloe we found that the court was being held in the town hall. This was on 27 May, 1920. It was most impressive, and carried out with grave formality. Draped in front of the dais on which the court sat was a silken scroll on which was inscribed '*Ui Maine*' (Hy-Many), the old name of the historic area. The court lasted all day. John Steele described it in an article which appeared on the editorial page of *The Sunday Times*.

In the autumn of 1920 the British authorities decided to suppress the courts. Raids and arrests took place. The courts were driven underground. The blow had been too long delayed to be effective. The courts were established so firmly that, although their activities were necessarily restricted, they continued to function.

My first experience of a secret sitting outside Dublin was at Mullingar. Kevin O'Shiel had come to preside there. The venue was in the county council chambers. There were a number of cases for hearing and all the prominent, local solicitors were engaged. I had been engaged to act as solicitor for a number of claimants, on the suggestion of my friend, Joe Kennedy, who later represented Westmeath in *Dail Éireann* for many years. It was not anticipated that the court would be suppressed. We had only just begun when word was brought that the building was being surrounded by military. I looked out and saw that this was so. Military, fully armed and accompanied by armoured cars, had surrounded the building. Fearing trouble and confusion, which seemed bound to follow, a county council official suggested that solicitors who wished to avoid their papers being seized should hand them over to be hidden in the council office pigeon holes and in the hall. This was hurriedly done. Suddenly the door at the end of the hall was flung open. A young officer appeared brandishing a revolver. "What's going on here?" he demanded. "This",

said Kevin O'Shiel, "is a court of the Irish Republic. Who are you?"

"You had better get out of this quickly, or you will be removed by force", came the reply.

Turning to us, Kevin O'Shiel said quite calmly, "Gentlemen, we must yield to superior force. It can now be judged, who wish to maintain law and order, and who are the disturbers of the peace!"

With that, we all moved out. Later we gathered in the Greville Arms hotel, where it was arranged that the court would go to outside areas and deal with the cases locally. For several days, Kevin O'Shiel moved about the country and succeeded in disposing of all the business without again being interrupted. One of the cases to come before him involved lands owned by a very well-known landlord, Mr. Gradwell, who had agreed to submit to the jurisdiction of the courts. Hearing of the action taken in Mullingar, he changed his mind. When the case was called and it was announced that Mr. Gradwell was not coming, Kevin O'Shiel promptly fined him fifty pounds for contempt of court, which, perhaps surprisingly, was subsequently paid.

An amusing incident took place at the close of one sitting of the court in an out-of-the-way deserted mansion on the edge of a bog. Michael Maguire, who was chief of the I.R.A. police, presided at a courtmartial on a prisoner who had been held for some days. We were present when he was brought forward. He was a young man who looked to be frightened out of his wits. The charge against him was that he, pretending to be an I.R.A. policeman, had ordered all the public-houses in Multyfarnham to close one evening about three hours before closing time. He pleaded guilty and received a sharp lecture from Michael Maguire, who fined him one pound and let him go. We then had an unexpected treat in the form of a recital of Gilbert and Sullivan's songs by Michael Maguire who had a very fine tenor voice.

By a decree of 29 June, 1920, *Dail Éireann*, at a meeting in Fleming's Hotel, decreed the establishment of the Courts of Civil and Equity Jurisdiction. Austin Stack, Minister for Home Affairs, selected a group of lawyers to whom he committed the task of preparing 'Rules of Court'. I was invited to meet him in his office in Dublin. He told me of his purpose and asked me to help in organising a judicial system. My first task was to interview Tim Healy with a request that he should become one of the judges. I went down to his residence at Glenaulin to see him. He expressed his sympathetic interest in the plan which I unfolded to him, but said that he was too old, that the work was for younger men. Later I joined a group which met at first in Buswell's Hotel, Molesworth Street, where we drafted the rules. Those present were: James Creed Meredith, K.C.; Arthur Clery, Diarmuid Crowley and Hector Hughes. The courts started to function. I presented to the National Library the copy of these rules, with all amendments, which was available in Austin Stack's office. I was asked by Austin Stack to act as one of the circuit judges. I explained to him that I thought I would be more useful in the land courts, which were being organised at the same time. Seosamh Ó Broin became the first registrar of our land courts. On our staff also was Gearóid McCann, subsequently clerk of the *Dail*. He it was who recorded the first meeting of the *Dail* in 1919.

My first sitting as Land Settlement Commissioner was in the town of Loughrea, in County Galway, in late October or early November. It had been arranged that Kevin O'Shiel should hold the court there. He, however, was unable to go. The fact that he was expected was partly responsible for my escape from arrest on this occasion. I arrived by train at Loughrea station. Acting on instructions, I went to the Railway Hotel. I sent word to Patrick Hogan, who was then practising as a solicitor in

the town and was mainly responsible for requesting a sitting of the court in the area. He was not a supporter of *Sinn Féin*. He explained to me that he realised that the land agitation, which was particularly troublesome in Galway, could only be controlled by our courts. When he arrived at my hotel he told me that I was in imminent danger of arrest. The local registrar of the courts had sent his notices through the post, and he, Paddy Hogan, had reason to believe that it was the intention of the R.I.C. to prevent the court being held. He, accordingly, advised that I should go with him to safe lodgings. This I did. There we held a conference to decide on a line of action. The notices sent out had intimated that the court would be held in the Town Hall. I decided that we would hold the court in a big room in my lodgings. Next morning we got a shock to find that British troops in large numbers had come into the town during the night. It was, obviously, going to be very difficult to carry on. We decided, however, to make an effort. We sent the registrar to the town hall with instructions that he was to move about as if he was expecting somebody to arrive. Meanwhile the solicitors and parties to the cases were informed of the venue decided on. The cases on the list involved claims against well-known landowners in the area, nearly all of whom had no sympathy with *Sinn Féin*. It would not have surprised me if, in view of the show of force, they, and their solicitors, had failed to appear. Not one, however, stayed away, and I had a very busy day. If my recollection serves me right, one of the cases before me related to the lands the property of Lady Gregory. The ruse we had adopted proved highly successful. Police attention was concentrated on the movements of the registrar. At midday the military, evidently tiring of the delay, seized the town hall and were blissfully unaware that the court was being carried out not two hundred yards away. After dark that evening we went quietly out to

Gortnay, the home of Count John O'Kelly, whose brother Gerald was later to be our Minister in Paris and Lisbon. I completed the remaining cases the following morning in Loughrea. I wrote my judgments and made up my orders before leaving. Patrick Hogan saw that they were typed for me by some of his staff. I posted the originals to a covering address in Dublin and sent duplicates to the solicitors of all the parties.

I slipped out of town that evening and made my way to Ennis, where my next sitting was to be.

The assistance which Patrick Hogan gave me was to prove unfortunate for him. The R.I.C. soon discovered the way in which they had been tricked. They raided his office and, finding documents relating to the court, promptly arrested him. He was sent to Ballykinlar Internment Camp. Later, as is known, he became a member of *Dail Éireann*, where he made his mark as a brilliant debater. He later became Minister for Agriculture. His untimely death was lamented by members of all parties.

The County Clare, where I next sat, was one of the liveliest spots in Ireland. The I.R.A. were very active. I listened to first-hand accounts from members of the I.R.A. of some of their exploits. It was but a short time before that they had carried out the spectacular feat of disarming a group of British soldiers who were marching down one of the streets of Ennis. The group of soldiers—twelve in number—had been in the habit of taking the same route day after day. The I.R.A. studied their formation and movements. In preparation for the *coup*, a similar number of the I.R.A., carrying dummy rifles reproduced the formation and movements of the marching men on a stretch of country road. Those selected for the attack practised disarming their comrades. The operation had to be perfectly timed so as to prevent any soldier from giving the alarm by discharging his rifle. As will be recalled, success was complete. The I.R.A. group



Republican Court sitting in Westport Town Hall in the summer of 1920. The author, Conor A. Maguire, Solicitor, Claremorris presiding. On his left, Éamonn Moane; on his right, John O'Boyle. At the Solicitors' table: J. C. Garvey and John Gibbons. Two I.R.A. policemen stand at centre of picture, only one is identified, Seán Gibbons.

jumped on the unsuspecting soldiers, pinned each of them to the ground and disarmed them. Without a shot being fired the raiders got away with twelve precious rifles.

Strangely enough, I found less difficulty in holding a court in Ennis than in areas where the I.R.A. were inactive. I stayed in Carmody's Hotel, which was visited each night I was there by active I.R.A. men. As a precaution, however, I held my sittings in a different place each day. One was held at the workhouse, another at the mental hospital, the third was at the county council offices.

As in Loughrea the leading solicitors in town took part in the proceedings. One of the cases which I tried there subsequently became the subject of proceedings in the High Court in 1922. It will be found under

the title of *The State (Kelly and Ors.) v. Maguire and O'Sheil*. The following extract from the report gives particulars of one of my orders!

"The applicants are or represent themselves to be landless men, or holders of uneconomic holdings and on the 12th November, 1920, they claimed in the Dail Éireann Land Court to be entitled to additional land to bring their holdings up to the standard of an economic holding, and after a hearing before Mr. Conor Maguire, he ordered that John Hynes and five other persons who were obliged to be in possession of uneconomic holdings should have allocated to them out of the lands of the prosecutors so much land as would bring the holdings in the possession of each of

them to a total valuation of £11, and he further ordered that James Keane and ten other persons belonged to what is termed in the order the non-occupying agricultural class, should also be allotted out of the lands of the prosecutors so much land as would provide each of them with a holding to the valuation of £11, and in order to provide this land the entire holding of Daniel Brohan was taken away from him and the compensation fixed at £200 and out of the lands in the occupation of Patrick Kelly, land to the value of £75, and out of the land of John Murphy land to the value of £5 10s. od. The prosecutors (other than Brohan) were, however, to get, on possession being given and certain requirements as to fences carried out, a sum calculated at seven times the annual apportioned rent of the said lands. The order further provided for the appointment of a valuer who should settle the boundaries of the lands to be allotted to the claimants and apportion the present rent on the lands allotted." The order concluded with the words: "Given at Ennis this 12th day of November, in the fifth year of the Irish Republic, A.D. 1920"

The subsequent fate of this order appears from the report of the case in the Free State Courts referred to.

From Ennis I returned to Dublin. As the winter of 1920 approached, things became more difficult for the courts as well as for the I.R.A. Nevertheless, we carried on. I do not know much about the operation of civil courts at this period, but on occasions I was called upon to sit on appeals. One such sitting was held in South William Street where James Creed Meredith, Arthur Clery and myself heard a number of cases. Amongst members of the Bar who appeared before me were Tim Healy and John O'Byrne, later Mr. Justice O'Byrne.

I also sat in the offices of the Dublin county council in Parnell Square. I had a

somewhat alarming experience in Templemore, County Tipperary, in November, 1920. I had gone to Cork to be present at the funeral of Terence McSwiney and came from there to Templemore. A short time previously the town hall had been burned by the Black-and-Tans and one of their members perished in the flames. It was a gaunt, smouldering ruin when I reached the town. The atmosphere was still tense. It was believed by our people that the court could not safely be held. I was determined, however, if possible to dispose of a case relating to the Carden Estate which was a cause of great trouble and which I had come down specially to deal with. In the hotel we were engaged in laying our plans the night before the court. Outside there was the silence of a town under curfew. Suddenly there was a knock at the door. All lights were put out. The proprietor crept down the hallway and in a hoarse whisper asked who was there. An answering whisper revealed the local sergeant of the R.I.C. who had come along to inform the proprietor that there was a lorry load of Black-and-Tans on its way to the town. Warning that all lights should be extinguished, he slipped away to the barrack. Naturally the suggestion was adopted and we escaped attention. Next day we held our court in the hotel without interference.

Bloody Sunday, 22 November, 1920, was a day of terror for all of us who were engaged in underground activities. I was living in 47 Lower Leeson Street. I learned afterwards that two Dublin Castle agents were staying in the same house and that a group of I.R.A. men had unsuccessfully sought them there that morning. Returning in the evening I found a crowd watching while Patrick McGilligan's house, 32 Lower Leeson Street, was being raided. I sought safe quarters in Dun Laoghaire.

I was due to travel on the following day to hold a court in Ferbane, County Offaly. As will be remembered all trains were ordered not to leave Dublin on that

Monday. I went down by an early train on Tuesday to Birr, the nearest station. On the way through Birr I found myself in the same compartment with the head constable of the R.I.C. I guessed who he was, but fortunately he did not suspect me. My disguise was simple—a sports suit and a bag of golf clubs. As it was late when I got to Birr I got in touch with the local registrar there and asked him to telephone Ferbane and inform those in charge of arrangements that the court would have to be adjourned. There was a list of cases awaiting disposal in Birr. These were to come on the next day. In the afternoon a messenger arrived from Ferbane who told me that at midday an angry group of R.I.C. men had raided the hall in which my court had been held, looking for “the man from Dublin.” Needless to say, I was relieved to have thus luckily escaped capture or worse, as tempers were very hot, as a result of the happenings in Dublin the previous Sunday. This news made me apprehensive as to what would happen in Birr, for it looked as if things were going to be difficult for us. We abandoned our plan to hold the court in a hall. Mr. William Barry, solicitor, however, with considerable courage, placed his office in Birr at my disposal and in a very tense atmosphere we got through the work of the court. Next day I moved out to a big house at Shinrone on the borders of Offaly and Tipperary. The news got around that the police knew of the proposed sitting and we were all very “jumpy”. Luckily we got through the business safely.

The months of October, November and December, 1920, were the most depressing part of this exciting period. The Cabinet seemed a bit worried about the loosening of discipline. I was at this time chairman of the Mayo county council—a position to which I had been elected in the spring of the year. The council had pledged allegiance to the Republic and acknowledged *Dail Éireann* as the lawful Government immedi-

ately after its election. In the autumn I was asked by Mr. Cosgrave, who was acting Minister for Local Government, to go to Mayo and obtain a re-affirmation of the council's allegiance. With a view to avoiding arrest, I slipped into the presbytery while awaiting the meeting and was hospitably received by Father Geoffrey Prendergast, who was one of the curates. I managed to get through the meeting which passed the necessary resolution and got back safely to Dublin.

During these winter months enemy suppression was slowing down many of our activities. Court work was naturally affected. The holding of courts entailed a good deal of organisation. Firstly, there had to be litigants, not alone prepared to stay away from the British courts, but ready to take the increasing risk of going before the *Dail* court. The Cabinet thought that there was some slackening in the work. I remember being present at a meeting where it was decided that the judges should go out on circuit as much as possible. We in the land court, however, had not much difficulty in getting work to do because of the fact that agrarian disputes did not lend themselves to settlement easily, and land owners, however much they disliked *Sinn Féin* were aware that land agitation was frowned on as an exhibition of selfishness in a time of national struggle. They also found our courts just. The difficulties of arranging and successfully holding sittings grew. To show the risk of danger we ran, it is enough to mention that the Black-and-Tans raided a *Sinn Féin* court at Craganock in County Clare on 6 December, 1920, and shot one man dead and wounded many. One of our judges gave it as his opinion that it was too dangerous to carry on. He remarked, “*C'est magnifique mais ce n'est pas la guerre.*” Shortly afterwards, he appeared to be justified when Diarmuid Crowley was arrested in his hotel in Ballina. His arrest made us all more cautious and by good

luck and good arrangements no other judges were captured.

About this time I learned that the R.I.C. were watching out for me in Dublin. I was told that a notice about me seen in a western barracks gave a description, and wound up by adding "last seen in O'Connell Street, Dublin, disguised as a priest." This was untrue. I had not at any time adopted this disguise. Up to the time of Bloody Sunday most of those working in the Government offices managed to move about pretty freely despite the vigilance of the so-called "authorities".

We had our office over a shop in Talbot Street, a few yards from Nelson's Pillar. For a long time Austin Stack had his office in Henry Street. There were many offices in the same building. I do not remember where Michael Collins had his office at this time—possibly I did not know. Seamus McGrath, brother of the late Mr. Joe McGrath, known as the *Bann ar siubhal*—walking bank—regularly called to pay the salaries of the staff. If I remember rightly, he carried on with immunity right down until the Truce.

Each office had its staff of loyal workers. The girls were splendid. All members of the staff carried on fearlessly right through to the end. I remember the day the Custom House was attacked. I had witnessed its burning from O'Connell Bridge. I went along to our office. The office boy came in later and told us that he had been through the battle. He was quite calm and gave us a vivid picture of his experience.

THE COURTS SUBSEQUENT TO THE TRUCE

Just as the Truce of 11 July, 1921, was approaching I had arranged to hold a sitting in a disused and derelict mansion at Laurencetown, outside Ballinasloe, County Galway. Despite the coming of the Truce and the absence any longer of the necessity for secrecy, it was decided to carry out the

arrangement made. Before going there I was able to go to Galway Races. This was the first big occasion in the west when expression could be given to the feeling of relief at the suspension of hostilities. Everybody was in the best of spirits and we, who had been under cover so long, were lionised, when we appeared in public. Up to this there had been coldness in many circles towards *Sinn Féin* and only those who genuinely believed in the cause kept up their hearts through the trying months before July, 1921. The Truce gave proof that *Sinn Féin* had adopted the proper technique. Throughout the country the surge of popular support became evident in the rush to join the organisation. In one short month the I.R.A. which was but a thin line found itself embarrassed by a flood of enthusiastic recruits.

I held my court at Laurencetown in the early days of August. Unfortunately as a result of the cold bleak weather and exposed site, I became ill and was out of action for some time.

Shortly afterwards I was required by Home Affairs to preside over a civil circuit court in Kilkenny. It had been arranged to coincide with the sitting of the county court. It was a tremendous change to find our court crowded with spectators and amusing to have members of the R.I.C. appear from time to time, to inform the solicitors that their cases were coming on before Mr. D. J. O'Brien, who was the county court judge. He had, however, very little business to do. In accordance with the new spirit brought on by the Truce he sent me an invitation to dine with him that night. I, perhaps churlishly, declined—I did so because I felt that the time had not come for friendly relations with the representatives of the British regime.

Our courts continued to carry on during the uneasy period of the Truce. I frequently acted as a judge of the ordinary courts and on one or two occasions sat as a

member of the supreme court with James Creed Meredith and Arthur Clery.

I was married in 1921, and got to London, travelling under an assumed name, I decided to try and get across to France which we had chosen for our honeymoon. An immediate difficulty presented itself; we would need passports. We decided to seek passports. On making our application at the office when it was seen that we were Irish we were told it was necessary to apply to the Irish Office. Feeling that it might arouse suspicion if we did not do so, we went straight across to the building in which it was housed. On entering we got a terrific shock to see the familiar figures of Auxiliaries loafing about in strategic positions ready to defend the place against attack. Fearing that to draw back would excite suspicion we went ahead and eventually found ourselves face to face with the officer in charge of such matters. We told him that, having come to London on our honeymoon, we would like to get over to France. I gave him my false name and address which was, in fact, my solicitor town agent's office. There was a danger that he would get on the telephone to the Dublin police station and discover our duplicity, but his soft heart was touched by our story, and to our delight, he gave his sanction to our getting a passport. When we reached Paris we immediately got in touch with Mr. Seán T. O'Kelly, who was the Republican representative there. With him, at the time, was the late president of the High Court, George Gavan Duffy, our ambassador in Brussels. We had many pleasant evenings with them in the Grand Hotel, where they had their headquarters. We gave them the inside news from Dublin and they had in turn had many interesting things to tell of the progress of our attempts to attract world attention to happenings in Ireland.

In the same hotel was the Egyptian delegation representing, if I remember rightly, the Government in Exile of Zaglul

Pasha. They treated our representatives with the greatest deference and respect. Seán T. O'Kelly gave a vivid description of the elaborate ceremonial with which he was received in the suite which was occupied by the Egyptian representative and his numerous retinue.

He told us that the Egyptians were anxious to have from Ireland some experienced I.R.A. men who would train them in the art of street fighting. He indicated by name a few whom he knew would be reliable and suitable if they could be spared. One name I remember was that of Teeling who had escaped from Kilmainham while awaiting execution for his part in the Bloody Sunday killings. When I got back to Dublin, I met, by appointment, Richard Mulcahy, Chief of Staff of the I.R.A., in 32 Lower Leeson Street, and told him of the request. The Egyptians, I informed him, would take charge of his men the moment they reached France. To my surprise he received the proposition coldly, saying: "We can't spare any men at the moment."

"What about Teeling", I asked. "He cannot be of much use with a sentence of death hanging over him!"

He laughed, saying "Would you be surprised to know that he was down in front of the Castle gates yesterday?"

I admit I was considerably astonished to hear this.

I learned later that the proposal was adopted. On arrival in Cairo, the I.R.A. officer decided that "street" fighting there would be quite out of the question.

Up to Bloody Sunday, Michael Collins, Gearóid O'Sullivan, Rory O'Connor and others came regularly to the Wicklow Hotel for a midday dinner. The proprietor and waiters all knew them. We, Art O'Connor, Kevin O'Shiel and myself went there regularly also. The only precaution we took was not to go through Grafton Street. Our reason for this was that we were warned that the C.I.D. (Criminal In-

vestigation Department) acted on the theory that sooner or later everyone they wanted would appear on Grafton Street. We learned this and took steps to avoid the danger area.

The year 1921 was a difficult year. The pressure on the I.R.A. and on all our underground organisations was gradually increased, and the number of courts we were able to hold gradually grew less and less. I remember going to County Limerick. This was one of the areas in which the death penalty for carrying arms was provided. After a difficult journey, I made my way to Knocklong and by direction walked some distance out to the house of Father Humphreys. Here I had some difficulty in establishing my identity. I found to my disappointment that there was no business for me, but I had the interesting experience of being present at a court held by Cahir Davitt, later president of the High Court. The atmosphere was very tense as the British military and police were very active in the area.

I also recall, although I cannot place the date, a journey I made to Borris-in-Ossory. I travelled to Carlow where I stayed the night, going by early morning train to Borris. The court was to be held in the house of Seamus Lennon, T.D. for the area. I was met at the appointed place and was about to drive away from the hotel yard in a pony and trap when suddenly the town filled with military. We feared that

if we stopped it would arouse suspicion. We drove along and to our surprise we were allowed to go through without question. The explanation of the presence of the overwhelming force was the arrest of Doctor Dundon. We got safely to our destination. Armed guards were posted all day, but we got through without interruption.

I held a court in the Longford area shortly before the Truce. The building where I sat was a disused schoolhouse. After the court I was taken to see a parade of the local company of the I.R.A. It was a ragged group with an extraordinary variety of equipment. Yet, despite their poor dress and equipment, they looked extremely formidable and efficient.

During all this time our headquarters in Talbot Street were lucky enough to escape detection. On the staff, besides Seosamh Ó Broin already mentioned, was Miss Devaney, now Mrs. Liam O'Doherty. Later we were joined by Leon Ó Broin, who later became Secretary to the Department of Posts and Telegraphs. He was a very young man who interested Art O'Connor, our deputy chief, because of his interest in, and knowledge, of Irish. On the staff, as practical land valuers, were Martin Heavey and M. J. Quinn.

The Republican Courts continued to operate until July, 1922, when the Provisional Government shut them down completely.



Ireland and The Paris Peace Conference 1919

by

OLIVER SNODDY

FENIAN contacts with foreign powers tended to look for assistance in the pursuit of revolutionary aims or to offer such assistance. From the foundation of the Irish Volunteers in 1913 onwards there was the open assertion of nationality that looked, especially to Europe, for recognition on the formal level. Joseph Mary Plunkett, for example, wrote in the *Irish Volunteer* of 7 February, 1914, about the building of

such a force in support of our own government as will infallibly make the voice of the Irish People audible in the Councils of Europe and our decision the supreme factor in all questions regarding this race and nation.

On 18 April, 1914, again in the *Irish Volunteer*, a writer asserted that

The establishment of the Volunteers has brought Ireland into the international eye and that

Ireland is an entity to be considered in the chancelleries of Europe in future.

At Easter in 1916 the Republic was proclaimed. For Ireland it asserted a separate status. There was an idea current that the holding of the capital for a certain number of days gave the forces of the Republic belligerent status and thence a seat at the Peace Conference at the end of the war in Europe. Connolly is recalled as having said: "If we are able to hold the

capital for 48 hours we would, in fact, be in a position to declare ourselves a Republic.”¹ In a speech on the Thursday of Easter Week, Pearse is recalled as having concluded by saying

that we have successfully held out as a Republic against the might of England for three full days. Wherefore, according to international law, we are legally entitled to the status of belligerents, and the presence of a Delegate in that Peace Conference, which must inevitably follow the war.²

Pearse may in fact have been making a speech of encouragement in this. There does not seem to be a basis in international law for his belief. Certainly the standard textbook on the subject, L. E. A. Oppenheim's *International Law* (London, 1940) gives no indication that Pearse's assertion had any foundation in law. Belligerent status would be given to active combatants, to which rank Ireland could not claim to aspire in the first few months of 1919. That there may have been something in international practice, in *Realpolitik*, as against international law in Pearse's suggestion, might be taken from the fact that the Polish national army and the Czecho-Slovaks were recognised by the allies as co-belligerents in 1917 and 1918 respectively (Oppenheim, *op. cit.*, p. 200) and from the revelation by Schleisinger, in his recent book on the “Bay of Pigs” fiasco, that it had been the intention of the U.S.A. authorities to grant belligerent status to the anti-Castro forces if they held out for three days.

Be that as it may the claim for belligerent status was not returned to in subsequent years. Nevertheless the Rising led to a renewed confidence that Ireland would be a topic for deliberation at the Peace Conference. Father Magennis was confident by the end of 1916 that “the Irish question was now in the international sphere”.³ Though the M.P. for West Clare, A. A. Lynch, was answered in the

negative by Balfour on 19 February, 1917, when he tabled a question at Westminster asking the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether Ireland would be represented at the Peace Conference, later that year John Dillon, M.P., asserted that the Peace Conference would have to deal with the Irish question.⁴ Most parliamentarians, however, were duped in their provincialism into thinking that Lloyd George's “Irish Convention” of 1917 was the appropriate forum for discussion of Irish questions and in this they were supported by the *Freeman's Journal* and the provincial papers loyal to them.⁵ Sir Horace Plunkett, of course, asserted the primacy of the Convention over the peace conference and Mr. N. B. King, J.P., speaking at Dundalk in June, asserted that

To rely on the Peace Conference of the Constitution on powers of which they knew nothing, would be to mistake the shadow for the substance.⁶

The substance was the Convention—Lloyd George's way of proving to the U.S.A. and to Wilson in particular, that England was seriously intent on resolving the Irish question. The Convention was mere window dressing, of course, but it seemed necessary to English politicians as a carrot for sweetening U.S.A. opinion at a stage when Page, the U.S.A. Ambassador to England, was urging Home Rule.⁷ The Convention allowed Lloyd George to pose as if he was doing something constructive about the Irish situation and also to complain of how “impossible” the Irish were, as he did in July 1919 when he is quoted as having said he had already tried to apply the principle of self-determination by means of the Irish Convention with the result that the Nationalists were divided into three different sections, and the Unionists into three or four. Until Irishmen agreed among themselves, he despaired of any settlement of the Irish difficulty.⁸

The Convention further was *pabulum* for

those in the U.S.A. who were arguing the *bona fides* of England in regard to Ireland: men like Shane Leslie described as "probably the nearest approach which Britain had to a secret and unpaid propaganda agent,"⁹ who "in this respect—proved most useful to Reading"¹⁰ and who "did more perhaps than any other to keep Irish American opinion on moderate lines".¹¹

The heirs of 1916, in contradistinction to the Parliamentary willingness to contain the Irish question within a "British" context in the convention, were determined to externalise and internationalise it in a world context through the projected peace conference.

On one side of the war the benevolence of Germany seemed to have been assured with the agreement signed by Roger Casement. Certainly in the "mosquito" press goodwill towards Germany was the norm. Had Germany and its allies won, it seemed likely that Ireland would have had a fair hearing at the Conference. But the agreement reached did not commit the Germans very far; it did not involve "belligerent status" and it awaited victory by the Irish before recognition. The important Article 10 of the agreement with Germany read:

In the event of the Irish Brigade landing in Ireland and military operations in that country resulting in the overthrow of British authority and the erection of a native Irish Government, the Imperial German Government will give the Irish Government so established its fullest moral support, and both by public recognition and by general goodwill will contribute with all sincerity to the establishment of an independent Government in Ireland.¹²

But again this was redundant in the event of Germany's failure to win the war. Contact with Germans, however, was used by English propagandists through the succeeding years in efforts to discredit the Irish Republic, especially in the U.S.A.

In May, 1917, an I.R.B. meeting discussed the Peace Conference and the possibility of U.S. and Russian support and agreed that a representative should go to Russia.¹³ The Supreme Council of the I.R.B.—by its constitution the Government of the Irish Republic—named Doctor Pat McCartan as its envoy.¹⁴ He went to England and made contact with a Russian doctor, whom, (after consultation with Gavan Duffy), he apprized of the situation and who in turn undertook to send the documents on the Irish case on to Petrograd.¹⁵

McCartan finding it impossible to get to Russia from England decided to go to the U.S. hoping to be able to obtain a ship from there. The idea of Russian support was not without sense. Lenin had published in 1916 his understanding of Connolly's participation in the Rising¹⁶ and had certainly been sympathetic to the Irish struggle. Trotsky insisted "that England shall allow the PEOPLE of Ireland, India, Egypt, etc. to determine their own form of Government" as McCartan's 1918 election leaflet pointed out.¹⁷ McCartan had written to the London Representative of the Russians on 12 June, 1917, pointing out that the Convention was "a transparent sham" and that "If the Irish question be a British domestic question, the Polish question is a domestic question for Russia, Germany and Austria." Once again, while the Russian revolutionaries remained friendly, this line of approach served no purpose at the convention. Bolshevik Russia withdrew from the war and did not partake in the Peace Conference or in the League of Nations it set up.

These contacts with the Socialist Revolutionaries were paralleled. In 1918 William O'Brien and David R. Campbell representing the Irish T.U.C. and Labour Party interviewed Maxim Litvinoff, in London, who promised full support for Ireland's admission as a nation to the International.¹⁸ At the International Labour

and Socialist Conference at Berne on 3 February, 1919, Ireland was admitted as a separate entity represented by Thomas Johnson and Cathal O'Shannon and the assembled delegates agreed to press Ireland's claim to a hearing at Versailles and in April the delegates to the Second International entered into similar resolutions.¹⁹

It is quite possible that these contacts served no useful purpose towards getting Ireland a hearing at Versailles. Thorstein Veblen has quipped that while containment of Bolshevism was not written into the text of the Treaty of Versailles it could be said to have been the parchment on which the text was written. The I.L.O. was appended to the League of Nations as an attempt to draw the teeth of Revolutionary Labour. Arno J. Meyer in his recent book, *Politics and Diplomacy of Peacemaking*, (London, 1968) brings out the fundamental truth of Veblen's quip and shows the extent the victors were moving to the right to seek security from revolution. They were confirmed in this drift to the right by the Bela Kun take-over in Hungary,²⁰ the unrest in Germany and Austria, and in English ruling circles by the "Red Friday" of 31 January, 1919, on the Clyde which was reported by the Secretary of State for Scotland to the English Cabinet as a "Bolshevist Rising" and which led to thousands of military being drafted into Glasgow in the succeeding days.²¹

The adapted Sinn Féin of 1917 was committed to "securing the international recognition of Ireland as an independent Irish Republic" as the first part of the formula of words (devised by de Valera to contain Griffith, the reluctant Republican, within the movement) had it and Griffith stressed the Peace Conference in his speech at the *Ard Fheis* of Sinn Féin in October, 1917.

Attention in the main was devoted to bringing pressure to bear on President Wilson whose fourteen points were taken by many subject peoples as their charter of

liberty. Had Wilson's actions rather than his precepts been studied it would have been obvious from his own activities in the Western Hemisphere that his high sounding principles would be shed, bent or twisted when what he conceived as the interests of the U.S.A. collided with them. His treatment of Mexico, as one example, has been described as follows:—"The Wilson Doctrine . . . was Dollar Diplomacy . . . it became a further stage in the successful efforts of American business to displace their European rivals, but it covered their efforts with the mantle of moral rectitude."²² (Mexico interestingly enough was one of the powers contacted, through their representatives in U.S., by McCartan. Their disposition towards recognition was friendly but it does not seem to have been followed up.)²³

By February, 1918, Wilson could say that the Irish question was 'a millstone round his neck'.²⁴ That it was so was a tribute to a magnificent organised effort by the Irish representatives, the Irish revolutionaries in the U.S., and Irish-Americans.

McCartan, before he left England for America, got a manifesto from the released prisoners, writing as Volunteer officers and citing the Wilsonian doctrines. This and a memorandum 'on behalf of the Provisional Government' he handed in at the White House for Wilson on 23 July, 1917.²⁵

The main propaganda vehicle in the U.S.A. for the Irish cause was the organisation set up on the eve of the Easter Rising known as Friends of Irish Freedom. Its first Irish Race Convention was held in March of 1916 and already the externalising of Irish attention, paralleling that of the organisation at home, is evident from the declaration of principles accepted at the meeting:

Finally we appeal to the Concert of the Powers—and particularly to America, if she be represented in such a council—to recognise that Ireland is a European and not a British island, to appreciate

that its complete independence and its detachment from the British Empire are vital to the freedom of the seas and to their restoration to the use of all the peoples of the earth and we ask in the name of the Irish Race—unconquered and unconquerable—for a seat at the Congress of the Nations to present the case of Ireland, to show its vital interest to Europe and to the world at large, and to demand in the name of liberty and of the small nationalities—for which England says the war is being waged—that Ireland may be cut off from England and restored to her rightful place among the nations of the earth.²⁶

With the main Irish-American Journals, *The Gaelic American* and *The Irish World*, co-operating and under Clan na Gael aegis the most numerous Irish American organisations collaborating, and with the assistance of men like McCartan, Mellows and Diarmuid Lynch from Ireland the F.O.I.F. became one of the greatest and most widespread Irish American public organisations, and one of the most important pressure groups in the U.S.A.

McCartan's gesture of 23 July, 1917—accompanied by the chairman and secretary of F.O.I.F.—had followed on a surge of activity beginning with the Easter Rising Commemoration meeting in New York on 9 April, followed by other meetings in many important cities and culminating in four resolutions on Ireland being brought before the House of Congress in April and May—all of which were denied hearings before the Foreign Affairs Committee.²⁷

The activities of the F.O.I.F. continued throughout 1918. By March a further four resolutions on the state of Ireland had been tabled before Congress, to join the other four already denied a hearing by the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Opposition to their activities multiplied also. *The Irish World* and *The Gaelic American* were banned from the U.S. mails and a large scale campaign of misrepresentation of the Irish situation unleashed.

To counteract the loss in circulation McGarrity founded the *Irish Press* in Philadelphia in March with McCartan as editor. In May the second monster Irish Race Convention was held in New York and its work put on a more solid footing with the appointment of Diarmuid Lynch as National Secretary. But as with the first, Wilson again refused to meet a delegation from it. He refused again in July to meet a delegation from the Mothers' Mission organised, among women whose sons were serving in the American forces, by Mrs. McWhorter of the Ladies Auxiliary of the A.O.H. (I.A.A.)

Pressure continued. In September a national conference of Clan na Gael issued a further call to Wilson incorporating some of his own declarations in favour of the freedom of small nations. As if to pinpoint the difference between the illusion and the reality Wilson on 4 July had reiterated his belief that

The settlement of every question whether of territory, of sovereignty, of economic arrangement, or of political relationship [rested] upon the basis of the free acceptance of their settlement by the people immediately concerned, and not upon the basis or the material interest or advantage of any other nation or people which may desire a different settlement for the sake of its own exterior influence or mastery.

That same day in Ireland, Sinn Féin, the Volunteers, Cumann na mBan and the Gaelic League were all proclaimed as dangerous organisations.

Nevertheless, the pressure in the U.S.A. was kept up and in November action was called for on the resolutions which had been pigeon-holed in Congress. Finally on 12 and 13 December a resolution by Congressman Thomas Gallagher of Illinois

Requesting the Commissioners Plenipotentiary of the United States of America to the Peace Conference to

present to the said Conference the right of Ireland to freedom, independence and self-determination

was debated by the Foreign Affairs Committee resulting in a book of 160 pages, which embodied about 150 petitions, telegrams and letters from various people and organisations in favour of Gallagher's resolution.

On 2 December, McCartan had submitted a demand, drafted by Mellows, Lynch and Dalton, to President Wilson in support of the claim to have Ireland's representatives heard at the Peace Conference. Copies were sent to the Governments of twenty countries.

Wilson left for Europe that month with the appeal of a thousand priests of the New York diocese and the resolutions of twenty-eight major public meetings organised by the F.O.I.F. ringing in his ears. Those of the Madison Square Gardens at which Cardinal O'Connell spoke were actually sent to him by radio while he was still at sea. If, as had by now become obvious, President Wilson was to be the focal point of the diplomatic activity, it was obvious that a powerful auxiliary had been forged in the U.S.A. to second and augment Irish activity from Ireland, to which Wilson had been invited by a public meeting held on 22 December under MacNeill's chairmanship.

The window dressing Irish Convention had folded its tents the previous April, including in their report a declaration against the advisability of conscription which was probably doubly embarrassing to Lloyd George in that he received during the same month a warning from Wilson that the application of conscription to Ireland might cause trouble in the U.S.A.²⁸—a small but not insignificant tribute to the effectiveness of the F.O.I.F. agitation.

Irish attitudes were finally clarified by the results of the General Election announced on 28 December, 1918, showing



Séán T. O'Kelly calls at Clemenceau's office to deliver Irish claim for representation at the Peace Conference.

that Sinn Féin candidates were returned for 73 of the 105 seats for Ireland. These had no intention of serving at Westminster and so the policy often urged since the Union but never acted upon was implemented.

On 7 January, 1919, a meeting of such M.P.'s as were available was held in the Oak Room of the Mansion House and at a further meeting on 17 January it was decided that a public meeting of Dáil Éireann be held on 21 January. At this de Valera, Griffith and Count Plunkett were appointed as delegates to the Peace Conference, the declaration of independence was read and an Address to the Free Nations of the world adopted. That the Dáil was allowed to meet may have resulted from the fact that the Peace Conference a few days previously had just commenced its deliberations.

At the private meeting held on 22 January, 1919, Brugha announced his Cabinet and named Seán T. O'Kelly as the man to go to Paris to try to secure the admission of the delegates appointed by Dáil Éireann.²⁹ The importance of his mission is indicated by a letter to him from Griffith, then in jail, on 23 January urging that attention be directed to the Peace Conference rather than to the release of prisoners.³⁰ The Dáil meeting of 22 January had also appointed a select committee of Seán Ó hAodha, Con Ó Coileáin, Pádraic Ó Máille, R. C. Barton, and O'Kelly to consider and report on the Peace Conference, Delegates' Substitutes and Delegates' Staff.³¹

O'Kelly was faced with a problem. He had an out-of-date English passport. He discussed this with the Sinn Féin Foreign Relations Committee, which included men like Barton, George Gavan Duffy, Michael Collins, Harry Boland and J. J. Walsh. The Freedom of Dublin had been awarded to Wilson on 3 January. Collins had the idea that O'Kelly be made one of a delegation sent to Paris formally to apprise Wilson of this. The Lord Mayor Laurence O'Neill agreed, somewhat reluctantly, and after a heated interview with Major Price, the English Chief of Intelligence, whose attacks on Eoin MacNeill caused O'Kelly to lose his temper, O'Kelly and P. T. Daly received their passports.

They travelled with Michael MacWhite, who was in the uniform of the French Foreign Legion, who advised O'Kelly that both Sinn Féin and Dáil Éireann were getting bad publicity, and who was asked by O'Kelly to translate the Declaration of Independence and other Dáil Documents and to issue them to the papers.³²

O'Kelly left Dublin for London on the night of 4 February. In London he obtained a military visa, again after some trouble, and through the Reverend T. Corcoran S.J., made contact with another Jesuit in Farm Street. This priest introduced him to

an Irish-American, Edward Eyre, who undertook to report on the personnel of the U.S.A. Delegation to the Peace Conference. Seán T. left for Paris on 7 February and on arrival took a room at the Grand Hotel where he opened an office.³³ He wrote to Wilson on 8 February³⁴ ostensibly to explain his mission on behalf of the Corporation of Dublin. He followed this up by calling at Wilson's hotel on 11 February and again failed to make contact.³⁵

Wilson was scheduled to leave on 14 February, happy that the League of Nations Covenant would be accepted. It is possible that Hoover, at Wilson's Paris office ensured that Sean T.'s communications did not reach the president.

After about a week in Paris Seán T. wrote Wilson asking for an interview as representative of the Republic of Ireland. This remained without reply. Next day he released to the press a note that he had been sent by the Provisional Government of the Republic of Ireland to seek an interview with Wilson with a view to the reception of the delegates appointed by Dáil Éireann.³⁶

O'Kelly reported to Ireland on developments and also to Devoy in the U.S. Gavan Duffy was sent out from Ireland to assist with the press releases, office organisation and other problems; financial support from F.O.I.F. ensured that the office could be kept running without difficulty.³⁷

Attention shifts again to the U.S.A. where on 3 January, acting no doubt on the election results, McCartan wrote to the American Secretary of State and to all accredited diplomats in Washington to the effect that the 'Union of Great Britain and Ireland is at an end' and that 'The Republic of Ireland denies the right of any foreign government henceforth to enter into negotiations or arrangements concerning the Irish people with the Government of His Britannic Majesty.'³⁸

On 15 February, Brugha and Collins wrote jointly to Lynch enclosing part of a



l.-r. Art O'Brien, Harry Boland, George Gavan Duffy, Sean T. O'Kelly. All became Irish Representatives abroad.

letter from Griffith stressing that substitute delegates from U.S.A. be prepared to go to France 'even if our original delegates reach France'. Griffith urged concentration on the Peace Conference and suggested that a substitute delegation be ready as 'The passport barrier will be worked very probably by Clemenceau.' The suggestion was acted upon and Frank P. Walsh of New York, Edward F. Dunne of Chicago and M. J. Ryan of Philadelphia were nominated to go to Paris to reinforce the work of O'Kelly.³⁹

A third Irish Race Convention was held in Philadelphia on 22 and 23 February, 1919. A committee was appointed from it to wait on Wilson in Washington to present its resolutions on Ireland to him. Their meeting with him coincided with the

adoption on 9 March, 1919, by the House of Representatives by 261 votes to 41 of Gallagher's resolution in this amended form,

That it is the earnest hope of the Congress of the United States of America that the Race Conference now sitting at Paris in passing upon the rights of various peoples, will favourably consider the claims of Ireland to the right of self determination.⁴⁰

But though the opinions of Irish-Americans and U.S. politicians were now clear, and though Wilson did finally meet an Irish-American delegation on the eve of his return to Europe, his attitude remained non-committal.

Meanwhile in Paris, O'Kelly had issued a letter dated 22 February to Clemenceau

and to every delegate at the Conference urging the fixing of a firm date for the reception of the delegate of the Government of the Irish Republic,

who are anxious for the earliest possible opportunity to establish formally and definitely before the Peace Conference and the League of Nations Commission now assembled in Paris, Ireland's indisputable rights to international recognition for her independence and the propriety of her claim to enter the League of Nations as one of its constituent members.⁴¹

The extent of O'Kelly's work and that of his staff at this stage can be gauged from the fact that the texts of this and of the Declaration of Independence were issued by them to about 140 newspapers throughout the world.⁴²

The countering of hostile propaganda was a major task. Sinn Féin and Bolshevism had been bracketed by one French paper as similar evils.⁴³ MacWhite had already pointed out the amount of adverse publicity being obtained. R. C. Escouffaire had published his hostile *L'Irlande Ennemie*—? in Paris in 1918. In it he averred '*La Question Irlandaise est une imposture internationale*' (p. 7), stated that to compare Ireland with Serbia, Poland or Belgium was '*une insulte à de nobles petits peuples*' (p. 9) and concluded (p. 271) that France not only did not owe Ireland anything but had been stabbed in the back by her:

et nous n'avons ni à nous en réjouir, ni à en remercier l'Irlande: elle a essayé de nous "poignarder dans le dos"—le mot est de John Redmond—et il serait intolérable qu'elle en tirât profit.

To help to counter this type of hostility, Louis Tréquiz, whose favourably disposed *L'Irlande Dans La Crise Universelle* had been published in Paris late in 1917, was drafted into O'Kelly's office.⁴⁴

Some indication of the success of the mission in breaking down the paper wall, as R. C. Barton put it, is the report of the

growing number of French papers which were markedly in favour of the Irish case towards the end of March 1919: papers like *La Libre Parole*, *Paris Midi*, *Le Siecle*, *L'Action*, and *Ordre Publique*.⁴⁵

Public opinion on this issue was not, however, destined to influence Clemenceau, whose officials later had Gavan Duffy expelled from France,⁴⁶ any more than his own House of Representatives was going to influence Wilson. O'Kelly's first letter to Clemenceau produced no result nor did his letter of 31 March, 1919, which pointed out that under Article X of the Draft Covenant of the League of Nations, Ireland would be regarded as an appendage of the English Crown with the article being interpreted as a way to perpetuate her subjection unless Ireland was accepted as a constituent member.⁴⁷

Since under Article X "The High Contracting Powers undertake to respect and preserve . . . the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all States members of the League", much of O'Kelly's propaganda work was aimed against this article. In this and in other matters he was co-operating with the representatives of India and Egypt.⁴⁸

In April his work was reinforced by the arrival of the delegates from the Irish Race Convention whose representations were put on the long finger by President Wilson. Nonetheless, they attracted considerable publicity. They travelled to Ireland on a fact finding mission, arriving on 3 May, and submitted their findings in a report to the Peace Conference on 3 June. Here they recommended the appointment of a commission by the Peace Conference to investigate conditions in Ireland under English military rule.⁴⁹ While much international publicity resulted from this and all their activities in Ireland and in France, nevertheless, the Irish-American delegates had no more success than O'Kelly had on the main purpose of their mission.

On 17 May, 1919, the Dáil delegates—

de Valera, Griffith and Plunkett—wrote to Clemenceau repudiating England's claim to speak for Ireland and on 26 May the official statement of "Ireland's Case for Independence" was sent to the Conference.⁵⁰

Meantime, the agitation in the U.S.A. reached a climax with the passing, with one dissentient, of the following resolution by the U.S.A. Senate on 6 June, 1919:

That the Senate of the United States earnestly request the American Plenipotentiary Commissioners at Versailles to endeavour to secure for Eamon de Valera, Arthur Griffith and Count George Noble Plunkett a hearing before the said Peace Conference in order that they may present the cause of Ireland; and resolved further, that the United States express its sympathy with the aspirations of the Irish people for a Government of its own choice.⁵¹

But anti-climax followed fast. On 11 June, 1919, Wilson met the Irish-American delegates in Paris and informed one of them that the Committee of Four had agreed that no small nation should appear before it without the unanimous consent of the whole Committee. Wilson had accepted Lloyd George's veto and with that interview the hopes of a hearing at Versailles for the Irish cause came to a practical end,⁵² though O'Kelly and his office continued their efforts.

In retrospect it seems obvious that Ireland had not a chance of a hearing. Our diplomatic activity was concentrated in the main on Wilson. Lloyd George was naturally opposed to the raising of the Irish question. Clemenceau agreed with him on this and was concerned most with the maintenance of the power of the victors. No attempt seems to have been made to woo the Italian delegate, who in any case proved to be a man of straw, beyond the documentation sent to all the delegates.⁵³

Wilson's high sounding principles were but words, but this could have been per-

ceived from his previous activity in the Western Hemisphere. He was further under pressure at home where the looming election was to be fought on the issue of participation in the League of Nations. And in the event the U.S.A. did not enter the League on which Wilson had rested so much of his hopes. There is some evidence too that his "brilliant brain and his masterful personality were already clouded with uncertainty." A member of the English mission has recorded that

One day . . . I found Paderewski, that greatest of all pianists, who had become the first Prime Minister of Poland. He told me he had been waiting an hour to see President Wilson, and that the Peace Treaty could not possibly be completed until after this interview . . . At last [maybe an hour later] a polite private secretary came to explain that President Wilson could not see Monsieur Paderewski at all . . .⁵⁴

The Versailles settlement was concerned 'to preserve as much as possible of the *status quo* lest it be overthrown by the forces of disorder and "anarchy", symbolised and embodied most threateningly in the Bolshevik revolution'.⁵⁵ This concern for stability led to much hypocrisy. Japan for example unsuccessfully tried to include references to racial discrimination and the rights of self-determination in the charter of the League but also took part with England, France, Belgium, New Zealand and Australia in dividing the spoils of the former German Empire.

General Smuts could say in Paris on 17 July, 1919, that 'the most pressing of all constitutional problems is the Irish question'⁵⁶ but do nothing practical about having it raised at the Conference. Nor of course did he help the Boers or the African National Congress who also sought admission to the Conference.

Some English delegates could be embarrassed by their possessions:

The most ardent British advocate of the

principle of self-determination found himself, sooner or later, in a false position . . . Our indignation . . . could be cooled by a reference, not to Cyprus only, but to Ireland, Egypt, and India. We had accepted a system for others which when it came to practice, we should refuse to apply to ourselves.⁵⁷ But the realisation of such falseness of position had no impact on the considerations of Lloyd George.

That we were an English possession, that

we had been an ally of Germany's, that we were for the most part Catholics,⁵⁸ that we had had contacts with Russia, that we had been compared with the Bolsheviks, that we were but one of a large number of small subject peoples⁵⁹ seeking admission to the concert of nations were probably all factors contributing to our failure to gain admittance. The over-riding reason, of course, was England's intransigence coupled with the refusal of Wilson to urge beyond Lloyd George's wishes.

FOOTNOTES

- 1 Michael J. Molloy in *Irish Independent*, 23 April 1962.
- 2 Desmond Ryan, *The Rising*, Dublin, 1957, pp. 149, 150. He is citing Risteard Mac Amhlaoibh in the 1917 issue of *The Belvedereian*.
- 3 *Irish World*, 30 December 1916.
- 4 Letter to the Town Council of Athlone on 1 June 1917 cited by Louis Tréguiz, *L'Irlande Dans la Crise Universelle*, Paris, 1917, p. 263.
- 5 cf. the editorials attacking Sinn Féin ideas on the Peace Conference in the *Dundalk Democrat* for 9 June, 28 July and 4 August 1917.
- 6 *Dundalk Democrat*, 30 June 1917.
- 7 H. Montgomery Hyde, *Lord Reading*, London, 1967, p. 281. Reading's predecessor in the U.S.A. was Sir Cecil Spring Rice who died shortly after he heard that Reading was to replace him. They had differed in regard to Col. House, President Wilson's *confidant*, as had Page. (*op. cit.*, p. 220). Page, who had been regarded as hostile to England because he had been accurately forecasting the fall of the English Empire, had been Ambassador during the years of diplomatic tension between England and the U.S.A. over the Mexican revolution (cf. Peter Calvert, *The Mexican Revolution 1910-1914*, London, 1968). As the war progressed he was felt to have developed too high a regard for England and was recalled for 're-Americanisation'. Desmond Young, *Member for Mexico*, London, 1966, p. 158).
- 8 *Annual Register*, for 1919, p. 95. One wonders if in this there may be, besides political chicanery, something of the liberal Protestant ideas on Catholics being unreasonable and unco-operative discussed by Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn in *Liberty or Equality*, London, 1952, p. 188. There, citing Jan Ciechanowski's *Defeat in Victory*, he says that when Roosevelt's emissary to Stalin—Harry Hopkins—was blamed for having agreed to a fifth partition of Poland he replied "After all, what does it matter? The Poles are like the Irish. They are never satisfied with anything anyhow."
- 9 Montgomery Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 282.
- 10 *ibid.*
- 11 Montgomery Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 279.
- 12 John Devoy, *Recollections of an Irish Rebel*, New York, 1929, p. 435.
- 13 P. McCartan, *With de Valera in America*, Dublin, 1932, p. 2.
- 14 *op. cit.*, p. 3.
- 15 *op. cit.*, p. 4.
- 16 *Sbornik Sotsial—Demokrata*, no. 1. (October 1916).
- 17 Copy among proclamation and poster collection in NLI.
- 18 Emmet Larkin, *James Larkin*, London, 1965, p. 229.
- 19 Dorothy Macardle, *The Irish Republic*, Dublin, 1951, pp. 277 and 293.
- 20 Described by Sir Harold Nicolson, one of the English team at Versailles, in his book *Peacemaking* 1919, London, 1933.
- 21 *Irish Independent*, 4 February 1919.
- 22 Peter Calvert, *op. cit.*, pp. 301, 302.
- 23 McCartan, *op. cit.*, p. 113.
- 24 Montgomery Hyde, *op. cit.*, p. 281.
- 25 McCartan, *op. cit.*, p. 14.
- 26 Devoy, *op. cit.*, p. 457.
- 27 The sections dealing with America are based in the main on the works of McCartan, Macardle and Devoy—already cited—and on chapters XI and XII (by O'Donoghue) of *The I.R.B. and the 1916 Insurrection* by Diarmuid Lynch, ed. Florence O'Donoghue.
- 28 Macardle, *op. cit.*, pp. 247/8.

To the League of Nations a portion of Ireland was finally admitted and though the Irish Free State did register, with the League, the December 1921 Articles of Agreement, despite England's strong protests⁶⁰ it seems a hollow victory when set in the context of the campaign for international recognition which failed at Versailles. That sustained campaign was a further indication of the extent of the continuous intense effort a subject people

needs to make in order to achieve a change in status.⁶¹ From the claims, ideals and beliefs that informed that campaign there seems to have occurred, with manifestations like the continuing differentiation between English and foreign and the 'home countries' concept of Irishmen representing 'Britain', a retreat from 'Ireland taking her place among the nations of the earth' to the provincialism of Lloyd George's Convention.

FOOTNOTES

- 29 Seán T. O'Kelly in *Irish Press*, 27 July 1961.
- 30 Seán Ó Luíng, *Art O Griofa*, Dublin, 1953, p. 317.
- 31 *Miontuairisc an Chéad Dála*, p. 26.
- 32 O'Kelly, *loc. cit.*
- 33 O'Kelly in *Irish Press*, 28 July 1961.
- 34 Macardle, *op. cit.*, p. 277.
- 35 *Irish Independent*, 14 February 1919.
- 36 O'Kelly, *loc. cit.* cf. also *Irish Independent*, 14 and 17 February 1919.
- 37 O'Kelly, *loc. cit.*
- 38 Macardle, *op. cit.*, p. 278.
- 39 O'Donoghue in Lynch, *op. cit.*, pp. 197-202.
- 40 *op. cit.*, p. 194.
- 41 Macardle, *op. cit.*, pp. 281, 927, 928. cf. also *Irish Independent*, 25 February 1919.
- 42 *Irish Independent*, 24 February 1919.
- 43 *Irish Independent*, 17 February 1919.
- 44 Count Plunkett's report at the Dáil meeting of 17 June 1919 (*Miontuairisc an Chéad Dála*, p. 117).
- 45 *Irish Independent*, 20 March 1919.
- 46 Count Plunkett, *loc. cit.*
- 47 Macardle, *op. cit.*, pp. 281, 282.
- 48 Count Plunkett, *loc. cit.* It is interesting to recall that Article 7 of Casement's treaty with Germany (*Devoy, op. cit., loc. cit.*) had envisaged the possible use of the Irish Brigade, in the event of failure to get to Ireland, 'to assist the Egyptian people to recover their freedom by driving the British out of Egypt.'
- 49 Macardle, *op. cit.*, p. 296.
- 50 *ibid.*
- 51 O'Donoghue in Lynch, *op. cit.*, p. 202. That opinion in the U.S.A. senate on this was no mushroom growth is evidenced by the reservation in favour of Ireland with which the senate ratified the peace treaty in March 1920. O'Donoghue, *op. cit.*, p. 213. M. J. MacManus, *Eamon de Valera*, Dublin, 1944, p. 101.
- 52 Macardle, *op. cit.*, pp. 296, 297.
- 53 McCartan's meeting in the U.S.A. with the Vatican representative, Archbishop Cerretti, on 13 March 1919 while it seemed to reassure him that the Vatican would not intervene against Ireland (McCartan, *op. cit.*, p. 102) could not be interpreted as diplomatic activity on the Italian front; the Pope was still 'the prisoner of the Vatican,' and the Lateran Treaty ten years away.
- 54 J.E.B. Seely, *Fear and be Slain*, London, 1931, p. 241.
- 55 Lionel Kochan, 'Cold War and Counter Revolution,' *The Jewish Quarterly*, Vol. 16, no. 2-3 (58/59), Autumn 1968, p. 45.
- 56 Macardle, *op. cit.*, p. 299.
- 57 Sir Harold Nicolson, *op. cit.*, p. 193.
- 58 Erik von Kuehnelt-Leddihn, *op. cit.*, p. 355 quotes *Letters of Franklin K. Lane*, ed. by A. W. Lane and L. H. Hall, Boston, 1922, p. 297. as follows "Theoretically, the President (Wilson) said, German Austria should go to Germany --- but that would mean the establishment of a great central Roman Catholic nation which would be under the control of the papacy, and would be particularly objectionable to Italy."
- 59 The Letts also sent a mission, *Irish Independent*, 10 February 1919.
- 60 Oppenheim, *op. cit.*, vol. 1., p. 722.
- 61 There is also the possibility that some looked upon the Conference as a *Deus ex Machina* which might by giving Ireland recognition obviate the necessity for a renewed war with England. cf. Macardle, *op. cit.*, p. 293.



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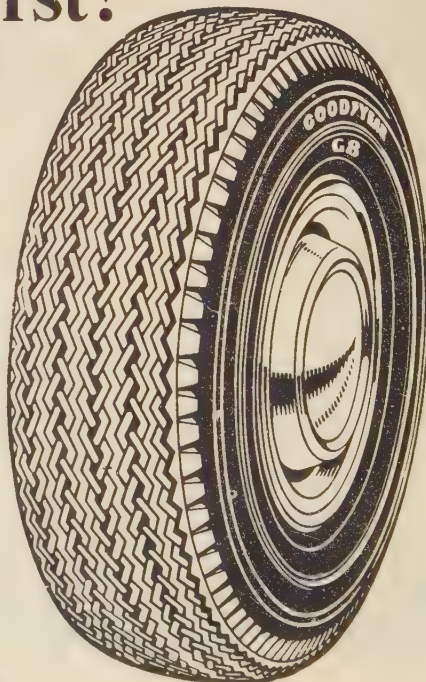
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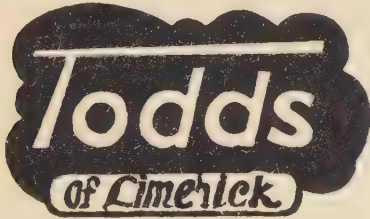
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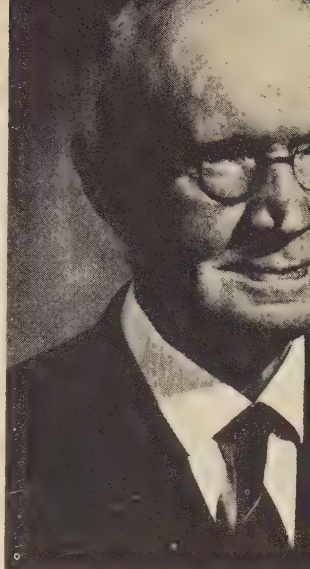
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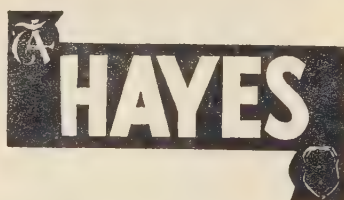
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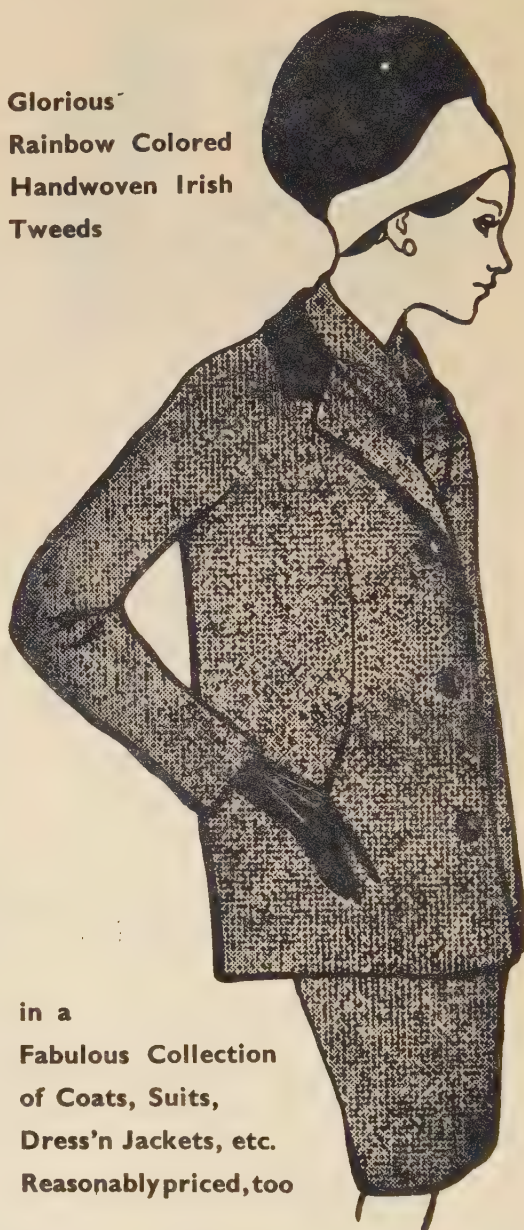
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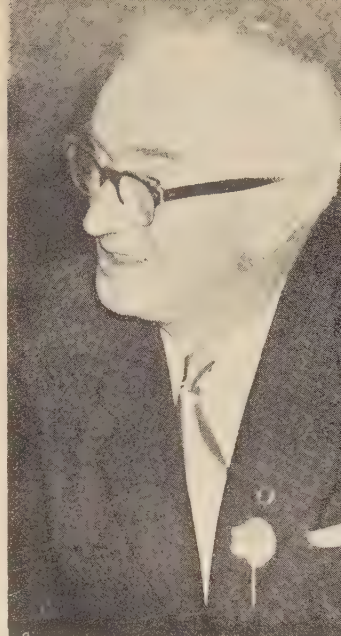
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Mr. Doran's name was known in G.A.A. circles as a member of the teams which represented Armagh and Down a few years ago.



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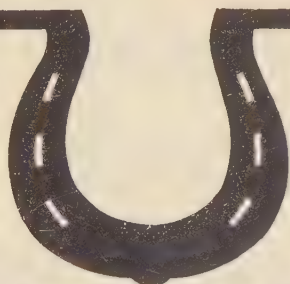
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SIDNEY Z. Ehler, LL.D., was born in Prague, educated in Prague and Paris where he took University degrees in law. In 1934, he entered the Czechoslovak diplomatic service where he was mostly concerned with matters of International Law. He has written two books, published in Czech, on International Law. An exile after the Communist coup in Czechoslovakia in 1948, he is now Professor of International Law and International Relations at University College, Dublin. Author of *Twenty Centuries of Church and State*, (1957), a collection of historic documents with commentaries, *Church and State through the Centuries* (1954, in collaboration with Doctor Morrall of U.C.D.), he has written numerous articles on historical and legal subjects as well as on current international affairs.



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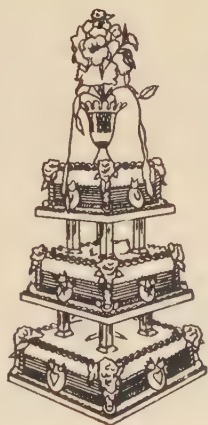
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KEVIN FALLER'S poetry has been included in anthologies on both sides of the Atlantic, the most recent being "Love Poems of the Irish" published by the Mercier Press. Recently he has been working on plays, not surprisingly since his earliest work for sound broadcasting and his first published book was composed mostly of radio plays. He has completed several full-length plays, some of which have been produced and others are scheduled for production. He has written several novels since his first novel was published a decade ago, and some of this work will soon be published.



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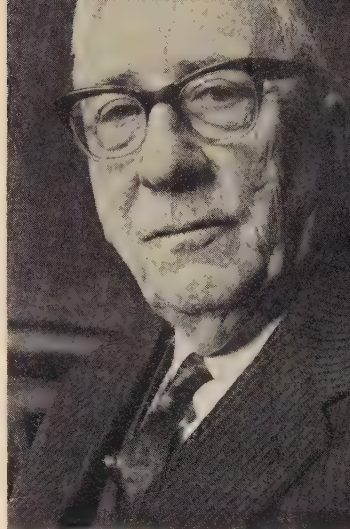
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PROFESSOR Hayes, born in Dublin in 1889, was educated at the Christian Brothers' Schools, Synge Street and University College, Dublin. In 1920 he took his M.A. degree there and later his Higher Diploma in Education. In 1929 he was called to the Irish Bar. Behind these simple statements of his academic awards lies a brilliant mind as his subsequent appointments testify. In 1912 Mr. Hayes became assistant Professor of French at U.C.D., in 1932 lecturer in modern Irish language and literature and in 1951 Professor of modern Irish. He is a member of the Royal Irish Academy, of the Governing Body of U.C.D. and of the Senate of the National University of Ireland. Side by side with his work as a distinguished University man he played a significant part in the

national movement from his joining of the Volunteers in 1913 and his taking part in the Rising as a member of the garrison at Jacob's Factory with Thomas Mac Donagh. In 1918 he was Director of Elections for Eoin MacNeill in the National University constituency. In 1920 he was arrested at his Dublin home and after some time in Mountjoy jail and Arbour Hill military detention barracks was interned at No. 2 Camp, Ballykinlar, Co. Down. There he became director of Education for the prisoners and organised classes in Irish, English, History, Mathematics, Geography, Spanish and acted as librarian to the camp in which were some twelve hundred books. In 1921, while still interned he was elected as a candidate for the University to the second Dail; he was released in August of that year under the Truce agreement. He voted in favour of accepting the Treaty in 1922 and became Minister for Education in the Cabinet. After Arthur Griffith died in August of that year Michael Hayes was appointed Acting Minister for Foreign Affairs. For ten years from that year he was Ceann Comhairle of Dail Eireann. He was chairman of the Civil Service Commission from 1923 to 1932. Professor Hayes held appointments as member of Seanad Eireann Cultural Panel from 1938 to his retirement in 1965; he led the Opposition from 1938 to 1948 and the Senate from 1948 to 1951 and from 1954 to 1957. For many years he was chairman of the Standing Committee and National Council of Fine Gael.



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BEDA Herbert, wife of Doctor Liam Brophy who contributes frequently to *Capuchin* periodicals, had her education at Dominican College, Eccles Street, Dublin, prior to her studies at University College, Dublin where she took her M.A. degree. Before her marriage she was a teacher and after marriage devoted all her time to the rearing and education of her four children.

Mrs. Brophy has again returned to teaching, and as well as looking after her home, she is ardently and affectionately engaged in teaching girls between the ages of eleven and fifteen years at Saint Michael's special school for retarded children, run by the Sisters of Saint Vincent de Paul at Glenmaroon, Dublin. She holds a Diploma in teaching handicapped children. A keen interest in elocution gives this versatile lady another role in life; she is frequently requested to adjudicate in the speech section at feiseanna in Ireland. She has contributed articles and poems to magazines not only in Ireland but in the U.S.A.



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MANNIX JOYCE
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hails from Bruree, Co. Limerick, and works in the Limerick County Council Offices. He writes in Irish and English, and has been contributing a weekly column in English to a local paper since the end of 1944. Articles of his have been published in various Irish newspapers and periodicals. He has been a contributor to The Capuchin Annual since 1961, and he has also done some writing for radio.

He is the author of two books in Irish, *Maraidh Seán Sabhat Aréir* (1964) and *Cois Maighe na gCaor* (1965), both of which have been Club Leabhar choices. Mr. Joyce likes travelling, and writes and lectures about places he has seen. In all he has visited some thirty countries, including the countries of the Holy Land, Russia, Morocco and Greece. He is an enthusiastic supporter of Irish culture and traditions, and of the Irish language, which he taught for a number of years at evening classes in various centres in Co. Limerick.



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SEAN Kavanagh, a Kerryman, born in Tralee, was educated first at Carragh Lake School and later at the secondary school in Killorglin. He followed his father into the railway and became a clerk in the Great Southern Railways. Later he became a teacher at the Christian Brothers' School at Mount Sion, Waterford. In 1917 he joined Sinn Féin and became a full time teacher and organiser in Kildare for the Gaelic League of which he had been a member for some time. During that time he worked with Michael Collins in the capacity he delineates in his article in this issue. Sean Kavanagh spent over thirty years as governor of Mountjoy prison. He saw the inside of Mountjoy first when he was brought there as a prisoner from Kilmainham, handcuffed to Rory O'Connor, in 1921. He joined the National Army in 1922 and during his two years' service was governor of Hare Park internment camp in the Curragh. In 1924 Kevin O'Higgins brought him to Mountjoy as deputy governor, and four years later he became governor. After he retired a few years ago he took up the post of Sales Administrator with Telecommunication Limited. He is a studious man who likes reading. He plays golf and is a past president of Elm Park Golf Club. He has always kept in touch with his Irish Volunteer comrades and is an active member of the 1916-1921 Club.



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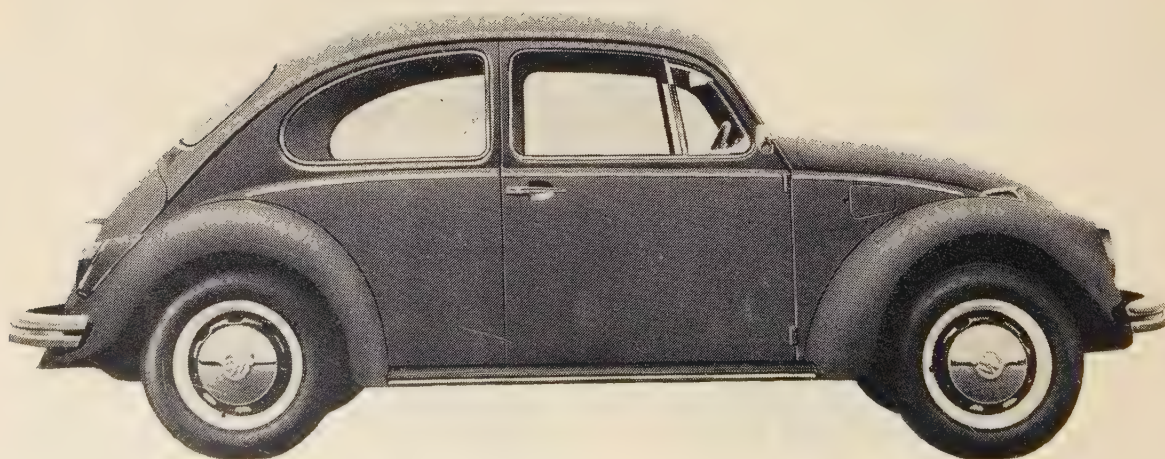


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FATHER Kelly, a curate in the Archdiocese of Tuam, was born in Westport, Co. Mayo and had his education at the Christian Brothers' Schools there and at Saint Jarlath's College, the diocesan seminary. He studied his philosophy and theology at Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, and won the degrees of B.A. and B.D. prior to his ordination in 1950. Father Kelly now teaches at the co-educational school in Headford, Co. Galway. He has many interests, especially reading and good music.



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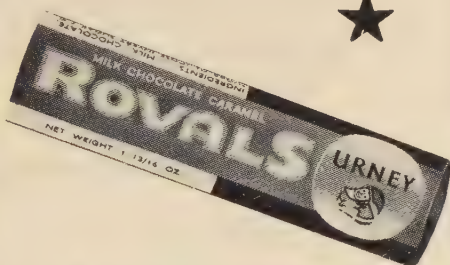
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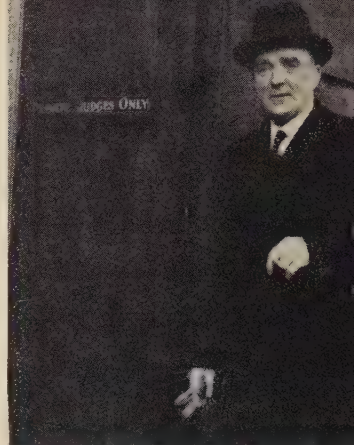
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MR. Justice Conor A. Maguire was born in Dublin towards the end of 1889 and had his education at Clongowes Wood College, Co. Kildare, and at University College, Dublin, where he took his M.A. and LL.B. degrees. He was appointed judge and Land Settlement Commissioner by Dail Eireann in 1920 to 1922. He was called to the Bar in 1922 and ten years later to the Inner Bar. Mr. Justice Maguire was prominent in the Sinn Fein Movement during the years of national resurgence and was elected to Dail Eireann for the National University of Ireland. He held the post of Attorney General from 1932 to 1936 and in that year became Judge of the High Court and Judicial Commissioner. Doctor Maguire was President of the High Court from 1937 to 1946. He held the chairmanship of the Central Council of the Irish Red Cross Society from 1940 to 1946, the Presidency of the International Celtic Congress from 1957 to 1961; was Irish representative on the European Commission of Human Rights at Strasbourg 1963 to 1965 and is Judge of the Court of Human Rights since 1965. He holds the decorations of Commandeur Legion d'Honneur from France; the Order of Saint Raimon de Penafort from Spain and Grosse Verdienstkreuz from the Federal Republic of Germany. The National University of Ireland and Dublin University both honoured him with LL.D. degrees. Mr. Justice Maguire is married and has three sons.



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GENERAL RICHARD Mulcahy was born in Waterford city in 1886. He received his early education at the Christian Brothers' Schools, Mount Zion, Waterford, and at Thurles. Entering the Post Office service at a comparatively early age his further education was received through the teachings of Arthur Griffith, Gaelic League associations and work, and, after coming to Dublin in 1908, at the technical schools at Kevin Street and Bolton Street. He had hoped to become a post office engineer, but participation in the Easter Rising 1916 had ended his civil service career.

He was a fellow member of the Keating Branch of the Gaelic League with Thomas Ashe, officer commanding the Fingal Battalion of the Dublin Brigade. A chance encounter between them on the afternoon of Easter Monday at Finglas where Ashe was encamped had the result that Richard Mulcahy served as Ashe's second in command in Ashe's Fingal activities. This and the circumstances in September 1917, of Ashe's death in prison and funeral, dictated the course of his subsequent career—a rapidly developing mixture of military and political responsibilities.

He became officer commanding the Dublin Second Battalion (January 1917), officer commanding the Dublin Brigade on its reconstitution in September 1917, and Chief of Staff in March 1918 when in a timely way the General Headquarters Staff of the Irish Volunteers was instituted, shortly before the conscription issue developed and most of the chief political leaders were arrested, on the "German Plot" pretence.

Political responsibilities came when in the general election of December 1918 he was elected for Clontarf—Drumcondra constituency, to become Minister for Defence under the presidency of Cathal Brugha in the first cabinet established by Dáil Éireann in January 1919. When in April 1919, following the general release of prisoners, Eamon de Valera became President and Cathal Brugha became Minister for Defence, he was appointed assistant Minister for Defence; and for the period of the Anglo-Irish war and up to January 1922 he served as Chief of Staff and assistant Minister for Defence.

When Arthur Griffith succeeded Eamon de Valera as President of Dáil Éireann in 1922, Richard Mulcahy relinquished military duties and became Minister for Defence, only however to resume military duties as well in the circumstances of June 1922. Following the death of Arthur Griffith and Michael Collins he served William T. Cosgrave, head of the Free State Government, in the combined offices of Commander in Chief of the Army and Minister for Defence until the general election of August 1923, and then, as Minister for Defence until March 1924. Subsequently, in Mr. Cosgrave's government he served as Minister for Local Government and Public Health from June '27 to 1932; and served under him for a long period of opposition until 1944, when he succeeded Mr. Cosgrave as President of the Fine Gael party.

It was on Richard Mulcahy's invitation as President of the Fine Gael party that after the 1948 election the Labour party, the National Labour party, Glann na Talmhain and Clann na Poblachta agreed to form with the Fine Gael party the Inter-Party Government of 1948. Following this, under Mr. John A. Costello as Taoiseach, he served two periods as Minister for Education and established the Ministry for the Gaeltacht—he had been Chairman of the Gaeltacht Commission in 1925.

In October 1959 he was succeeded in the leadership of the Fine Gael party by Mr. James M. Dillon; and in 1961 he retired from the Dáil where in later years he had represented the constituency of South Tipperary.



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MR. O'Connell began writing at an early age and first appeared in print in The Father Mathew Record. He had his early education at the North Monastery, Cork, and later studied Art and modern languages. Mr. O'Connell has contributed to the ANNUAL before and has written also in many other publications, not only in Ireland but in England and the United States of America. He has three books published by The Talbot Press; The Vanishing Island, The Miracle Maker and The Stubborn Heart.



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FATHER Ó Fiaich was born in 1923 just north of the border, in South Armagh. Passing Urrchill an Chreagáin of Mac Cubhthaigh's poem daily on the way to school enkindled a lively interest in the language and history of the country, and annual visits to the Donegal Gaeltacht, combined with the strong Irish atmosphere of his father's school, and of Saint Patrick's College, Armagh, provided knowledge and encouragement. At Saint Patrick's College, Maynooth, he took his B.A. degree in Celtic studies in 1943. After his ordination at Saint Peter's College Wexford in 1948, he went to University College, Dublin, to follow post-graduate studies in Early Irish History in which he took his M.A. degree in 1950. At the University of Louvain his further studies in history gained him a Licenciature in Historical Sciences in 1952. He was appointed to the Chair of Modern History at Maynooth College in 1953, where he has been active in many spheres in the life of the College and in Irish cultural fields outside it. He was chosen as Chairman of the Commission on the Restoration of the Irish Language from 1959-1963; President of Cumann na Sagart (1955-1967); Secretary of Maynooth Union Summer School in its early years; editor of Seanchas Ardmhacha (1954-1962) and joint editor of An Sagart (1958-1963). Father Ó Fiaich has written in Irish, Gaelscrínte a gCéin, in 1961 and Irish Cultural Influence in Europe in 1967, and contributed many historical articles in various periodicals. He has time for three hobbies in spite of his many commitments. He likes to visit Croke Park for a football match, especially when his native Ulster teams are playing; he enjoys a ballad or sean-nós session in Connemara or a walk anywhere from Cape Clear to Berlin.



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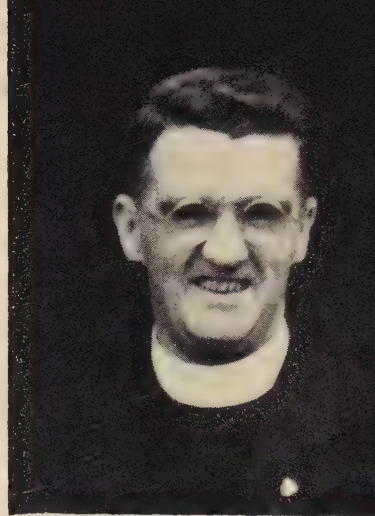
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aire began his
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went to Saint
Patrick's School,
Drumcondra and
subsequently to Belve-
dere College. He
studied for his degrees
in Celtic Studies at
University College,
Dublin, where he
graduated and for
two years in the
National Library of
Wales at Aberyst-
wyth and at the
University there. He
was director of the
Jesuit University
Students at Rath-
farnham from 1950 to
1960 and prefect of Studies at Belvedere College for a
few years. With other members of An Realt he visits
Wales still. He has written articles for *Feasta* and *The
Furrow*. Father Ó Laoghair is at present on the staff
of Gonzaga College, Dublin, where he studies as well as
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National College of Art he won the Purser-Griffith Scholarship in the History of European Painting. His sculptures in wood, bronze and stone are in Boston, Massachusetts, Saint John's Parliament House, Newfoundland, U.S.A. In Ireland his work can be seen in Galway, Newport, Co. Mayo, Newry, Belfast, Downpatrick, Kilkenny, Dublin and Cork. He holds the posts of Assistant Professor of Sculpture at the Dublin National College of Art since 1945 and Lecturer on the History of Art at the National Gallery since 1952. He was appointed by the Arts Council to complete Jerome Connor's Lusitania Peace Memorial at Cobh, Co. Cork. He is deeply interested in Irish poetry and music and in local history.



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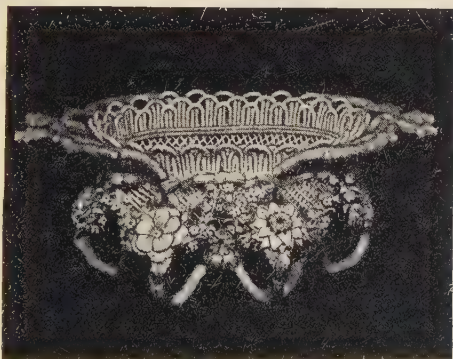
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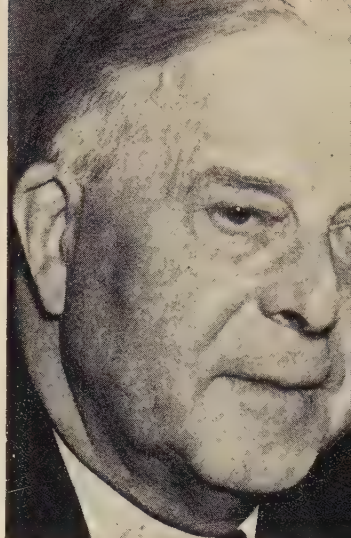
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SENATOR Ryan had his early education at Saint Peter's College, Wexford, and the renowned Irish College at Ring, Co. Waterford. He qualified as a medical doctor at University College, Dublin. While yet a student, he attended to the medical needs of the Volunteers in the G.P.O. in 1916. He entered public life in 1918 when he was elected as member of parliament for South Wexford. In 1919 he became vice-chairman of Wexford Co. Council, a post he held until 1922, even though he was interned in Spike Island, Co. Cork, from 1920 to 1921. From 1921 to 1923 he was a member of Dail Eireann for Co. Wexford. From then until 1965 he has been an elected member of the Fianna Fail party and held Cabinet posts for over thirty years, as, successively, Minister for Agriculture, Health and Social Welfare and Finance. He did not seek re-election in 1965. He is since then a member of Seanad Eireann. Doctor Ryan has also made a significant mark in the business world and holds directorships in a number of companies.



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BREANDÁN Ó

Riordáin graduated in Archaeology at U.C.G. and later took an M.A. in the same subject at U.C.D. As a professional archaeologist on the staff of the National Museum he has directed excavations dealing with all periods of Irish archaeology. Over the past ten years he has become well known to radio listeners for his series of lectures on archaeology and he has lectured to many societies and groups throughout the country on various aspects of the subject. He is currently directing the extensive excavations relating to Viking and medieval times at High Street, Dublin.



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MISS Perry, who was born in Dublin, was educated by the Holy Faith Sisters and at the Dominican College, Eccles Street. Her natural artistic talent made her an apt candidate for the scholarship she won to Dublin's College of Art. There she qualified as an Art Teacher and now holds a teacher's post in two important Dublin schools. She has done illustrations for the Press and for magazines and has designed heraldic plaques and worked in ceramics. Portrait painting has a special attraction for her and she also takes a keen interest in music. Miss Perry's drawings in this issue of THE CAPUCHIN ANNUAL testify to the high quality and intelligent approach this young artist has to her subject.



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PROFESSOR Ryan, a leading Irish historian, was Professor of Early Irish History for many years at University College, Dublin, and is now Professor Emeritus. He held the appointment of Special Lecturer at the Gregorian University, Rome, during the years from 1951 to 1964. He is a past president of the Royal Society of Antiquarians, Ireland, and of Thomond Archaeological Society. Father Ryan was elected Member of the Royal Irish Academy and appointed a member of the Board of Celtic Studies in Dublin Institute of Advanced Studies. He is author of the important Irish Monasticism, editor of Féilsgríbhinn Eóin Mich Néill and of Irish Monks in the Golden Age. He contributed to Die Religionen der Erde (edited by Cardinal Koenig, Vienna); to Le Miracle Irlandais (edited by Daniel-Rops); the new Catholic Encyclopedia; the new Encyclopedia Britannica; Herder's Kirchliches Handlexicon, as well as to various journals. This scholarly Irishman was born in Castleconnell, Co. Limerick in 1894, educated at Crescent College, Limerick and at U.C.D. where he took his M.A. and D.Litt. degrees. He studied also at the University of Bonn and in Louvain, Holland, Spain, Munster in Westphalia. We are honoured to publish his article in this issue of the Annual.



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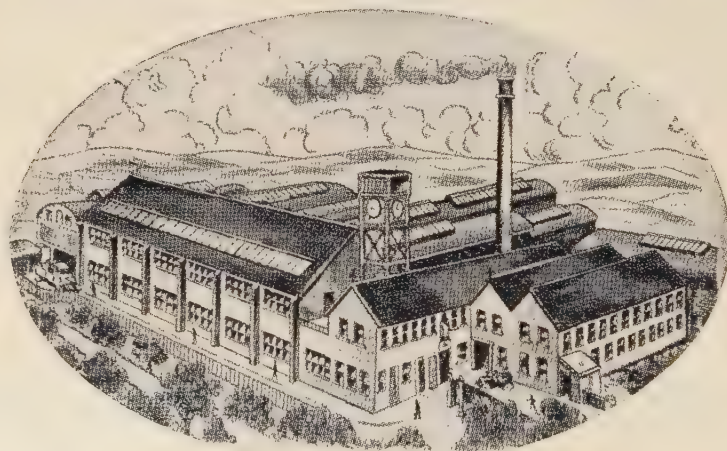
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MR. Rynne is a young man in his thirties and at present holds the Lectureship in Celtic Archaeology in University College, Galway. He had his education in Ireland, and in France for six months. He studied Archaeology under Professor Sean P. Ó Riordáin at U.C.D. and was awarded his B.A. in 1953 and his M.A. in 1955. In 1956 he won the Travelling Studentship Prize in Archaeology. This enabled him to travel to many of Europe's great Museums for study purposes. On his return in 1957 he joined the Irish Antiquities Division of the National Museum of Ireland, where he worked until 1967 when he took up his appointment in Galway. In 1966 he was elected a member of the Royal Irish Academy—a signal distinction for so young a man. Mr. Rynne excavated at sites not only in Ireland but in Scotland and Germany and has lectured to learned societies in Ireland, England, Scotland, Wales, Germany and Italy. He has about seventy articles published in Irish and British journals that deal with archaeology. The article on Celtic Art in the Catholic Encyclopedia for School and Home published in 1966 in the U.S.A. is from his pen. He acts as honorary editor of The North Munster Antiquarian Journal, the annual publication of the Thomond Archaeological Society and edited North Munster Studies, Essays in Commemoration of Monsignor Michael Moloney, a large book containing numerous important essays on archaeology, history, biography, numismatics inter alia. This publication has been ranked high among recent learned books in Ireland. Mr. Rynne is a married man with one son.



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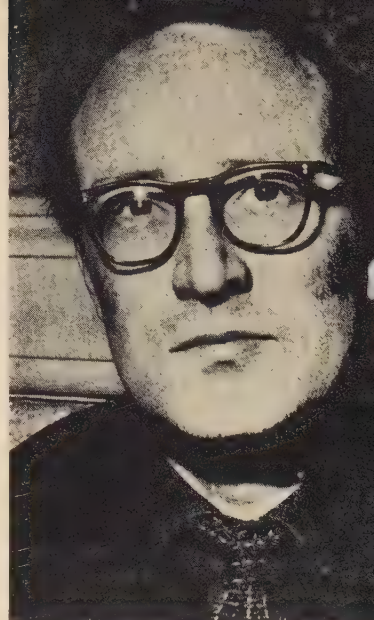
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MR. SNODDY, a *Carlow man*, *Carlow Christian Brothers' school scholar*, is well known as a *historian and poet*. His *M.A. thesis* had the attraction of dealing with relatively modern history, *Irish Revolutionary Movements 1913-1916*. At present he is in charge of the *History and Arms collection* in the *National Museum of Ireland, Kildare Street, Dublin*. In collaboration he has published three collections of poems. He has essays published in *Studia Hibernica*; *The Irish Sword*; *North Munster Antiquarian Journal*; *An Cosantoir* to mention only a few. *Mr. Snoddy's book, Comhghuallithe na Réabhlóide 1913-1916*, was awarded third prize, 500 pounds, in the *Butler Family Book Awards* for books published in Irish between June, 1965 and 31 December, 1966.



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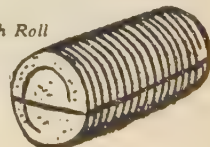


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MR. Stapleton, a Dublin man, made a significant mark, one may say, in three spheres. As a Volunteer during the War of Independence he was chosen as a member of "the Squad", an elite corps, directly under Michael Collins. He holds 1916 and 1921 medals with bar. He was a staff captain in the National Army at its inception, became liaison officer at the taking over of military installations from the British. He held the ranks of officer commanding Baldonnell aerodrome; Colonel, Army Corps of Engineers; officer Commanding Army Field Training Depot. In civilian life, his first appointment was as organiser of a camp scheme for some 2,000 German and Irish workers at the building of the Shannon Scheme. He then became a member of the staff of the Chief accountant of the Electricity Supply Board. In April 1942 he joined the Turf Development Board and organised the hostel scheme

for the workers at Kildare. Over 6,000 workers were accommodated in the hostels where 20,000 meals were supplied daily. In his work for the Board he travelled the country lecturing and engaging in Press conferences to promote interest in the essential work the Turf Board carried out during the emergency. During this time, too, he edited a fortnightly camp magazine, *An Slean*, which was published during the whole period of the scheme. Mr. Stapleton was later charged with the establishing of seven modern villages which Bord na Mona were building in different parts of the country where their works developed. The largest of these is Coill Dubh, near the Timahoe works and the Allwood power station in Co. Kildare. It accommodates five hundred people and is equipped with all modern amenities. Mr Stapleton's next appointment was as marketing director for peat moss, which is largely an export product, and which has considerable sales in England, the Channel Islands, Canary Islands and U.S.A. In 1958 he became public relations' officer and sales manager for Bord na Mona. On the setting up of the Industrial and Services' Catering Management Association he was elected its chairman and is now an honorary life member. He held an appointment in Coras Iompair Éireann's subsidiary company, Oslanna Iompair Éireann. He retired from public life in 1962. He is still very active: a keen golfer he is a past president of Clontarf Golf Club, Dublin. Boxing is another interest which led him to become a president of the Leinster Provincial Council and a member of the Standing Committee of the Irish Amateur Boxing Association. A third interest is magic and he is a founder member of the Society of Irish Magicians and has with others represented this interest at the London Magic Circle. He has written *Milestones of Magic*, a history, which was serialized in a well-known London Magical Journal. Another hobby he enjoys is painting in oils.



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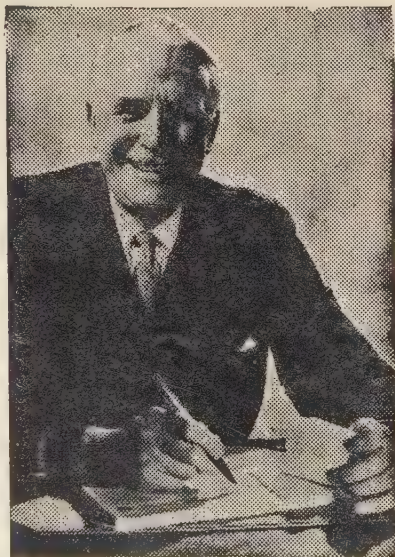
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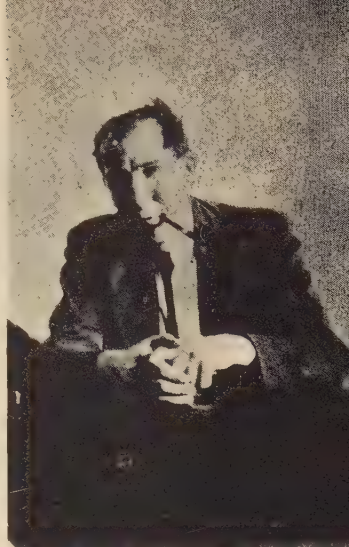
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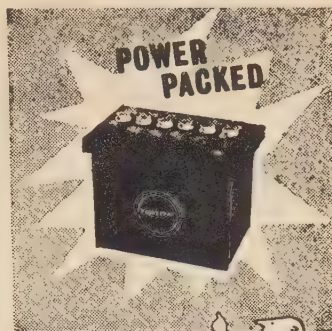
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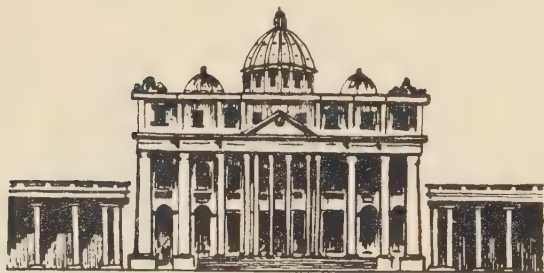
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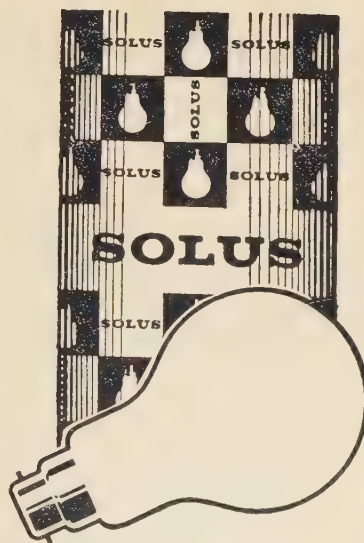
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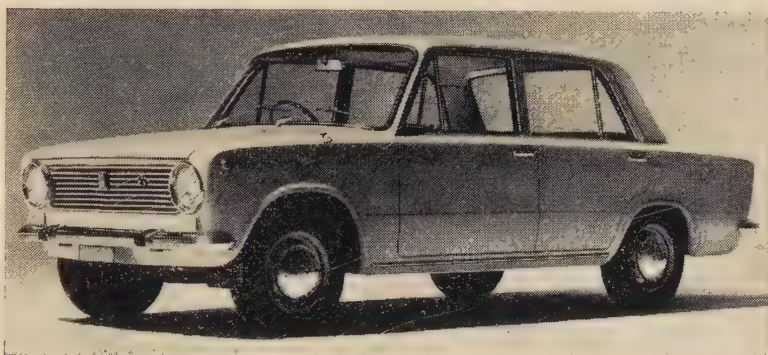


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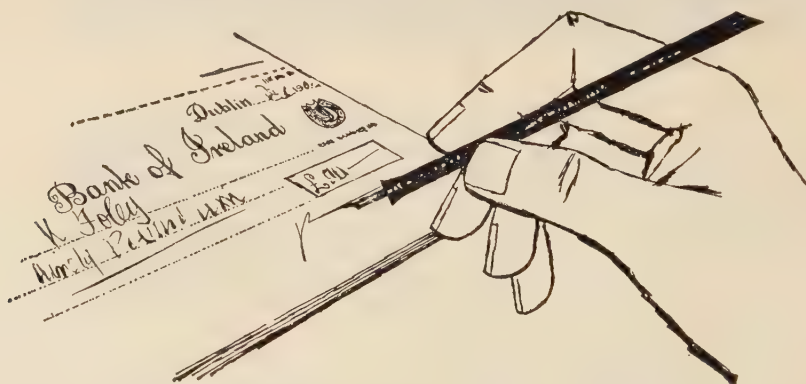
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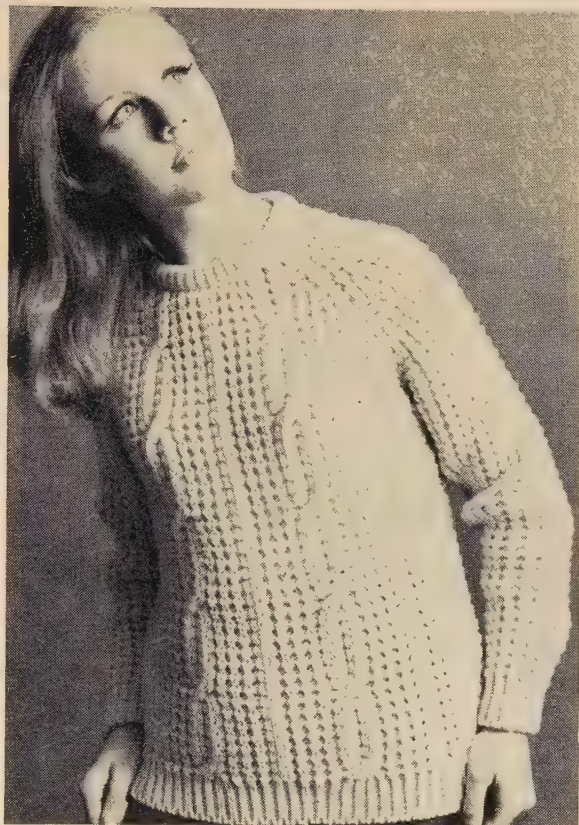


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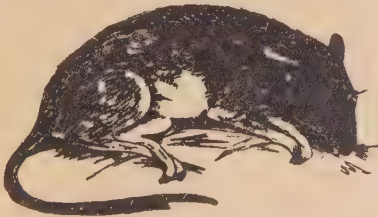
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